



DECEMBER 2021

LEAGUE LEADERS: MESSAGES OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



Resolve to Take Action Co-President's Message By Linda Bjella

We have all heard the old adage: "All politics is local." In her excellent presentation on November 15, Nancy Jones focused on local engagement as an "upward spiral", quoting the famed animal rights activist Jane Goodall from her recent book, *The Book of Hope*. Goodall noted that so many people look at the world and, depressed by the enormity of the problems, they are stymied and feel powerless. She advised that the best way to take the first step forward is to get involved locally. When you engage with a small group of like-minded people in your community, you find that you can make a positive difference.

When was the last time you attended a local government meeting? Leaguers have been doing this for generations as part of our Observer Corps. We have kept our ears to the ground, dutifully showing up wearing our LWV buttons, quietly listening and taking notes from the back of the room. We then reported back to the LWV board, calling attention to important issues and when decisions would be made by our local leaders. When the time came for a vote by a city council, county board, or school board, the League president was there to make a statement on behalf of our organization. This process of local engagement is the bedrock of League, and has earned our organization the respect of our local officials. They know that we stand squarely on the side of good government.

It's hard to find a silver lining during this dreadful pandemic, but this may be one: It has never been easier

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Exciting Changes on Horizon By Marti Hemwall, Co-President

2022 will bring many new and exciting changes for our League. You will notice in every newsletter new projects, new technology advances, new ideas being implemented by our members. Everything we are doing is focused on making the League even more effective in providing great voter information, getting community members registered, and advocating for important League positions.

This month we have exciting technology news. Our board has been working hard for several months, under the guidance of members Dave Strange and Barb Kelly, to develop a new website. We will move to a platform recommended by LWVUS which is meant to increase our resources and visibility, and better serve our members and our communities. Soon you will be able to use the new website's features to renew your membership, more easily find volunteer opportunities, find a more robust events calendar, follow online discussion forums, and locate critical voting and candidate information.

Look for a communication from Linda and me in the near future announcing this change. I am sure you will be as excited as we are!

In the meantime, if you see Dave Strange or Barb Kelly, give them a Thank You for their tremendous work in helping our League move into the 21st Century!

Bjella: Resolve to Take Action, continued

to observe and engage with local government. No longer do you have to go out on a dark, winter evening and find a place in a corner of the city council chambers or board room to listen to the proceedings. Virtually every local government meeting is now available on-line, and accessible as a live stream. Don't have time at the dinner hour to log in? No problem. Most meetings are recorded and posted for later viewing. There is a lot of mundane discussion to be sure, but listening to the deliberations that our local elected officials go through as they come to important decisions is a real learning experience. Before long, you will find yourself talking to others about what you've observed, and find ways to "act locally" that can make a positive difference in your corner of the world.

The end of the year is a time for taking stock and making resolutions for the new year. Consider making a resolution to take a positive step to act locally and get involved in our Observer Corps. Contact our Action Vice-President, Jan Quinlan, to volunteer. By the way, if you missed Nancy's presentation on November 15, you can watch the recording of it on our website: lwvppleton.org.

President's Statement Based on League Position

By Marti Hemwall, Co-President

On behalf of your League, I made a statement to the City of Appleton's Common Council during the November 3 public hearing on the 2022 Budget Proposal. The statement was written after studying the budget, identifying relevant LWV positions, participating in the Mayor's informal Listening Session on October 27, and listening to the Council's discussions during Budget Saturday, on October 30.

The budget was adopted with only minor amendments on November 10. Several League members observed or participated in one or more of this month-long budget process, which also included more than one Finance Committee meeting. Our participation is always noted.

As Linda Bjella points out in her article this month: observing our government at work is not only fascinating, it makes a difference. Consider taking time to participate in the League's Observer Corps. Learn more by contacting Action Vice President Jan Quinlan at jldquinlan@gmail.com

Read the full statement [here](#).

No Time Like the Present!

Renew your League membership today. Deadline is January 7, 2022.

There are 3 easy ways to renew:

- Mail the renewal form along with a check to LWV Appleton, PO Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912
 - Renew online at lwvappleton.org
 - Renew in person at the Holiday Brunch on Dec. 11.

There's always time to reach out to Membership Director Cindy Fallona with questions.

Email her at cbfallona@hotmail.com

Now Do We Have Fair Maps? Not So Fast

By Penny Bernard Schaber

We do not have Fair Maps. Several important steps occurred leading up to a Wisconsin Supreme Court decision on November 30 that left us with maps that are more gerrymandered than the ones we currently have.

On November 8 and 11 the Wisconsin Senate and Assembly passed SB 621 and SB 622. These bills are the GOP proposed legislative and congressional maps. These maps are based on the current highly gerrymandered maps of 2011 continuing the highly partisan majority in both the Senate and the Assembly.

During discussion of the bills, the majority party brought up the maps from the People's Maps Commission (PMC). They did this knowing there was disagreement within the minority party on the PMC maps and that the PMC maps would not be passed by either the State Senate or Assembly.

On November 18, Governor Evers vetoed both bills, forcing the redistricting process into the court system. This does not end the process. There are two possible steps the majority party could take:

- Override the governor's veto. They do not have a supermajority in the state Senate and would need at least one minority party vote. It is not clear if they will try and override the veto or not.
- The majority party could pass a Joint Resolution that includes the new GOP maps. The last time this was tried the Wisconsin Supreme Court said that it was unconstitutional.

The next part of the process will be fast moving and complex, because partisan election processes will start in April and May of 2022. District lines will need approval by then so candidates and elected officials for the state legislature know in which district they will campaign.

The new maps will likely be decided in the court system! But — which court system?

On November 30 the Wisconsin Supreme Court took up the GOP maps and issued a decision. They decided to use the same maps that Gov. Evers vetoed, stating in their decision that the "least change" basis for the maps was valid. This decision approves maps that are more gerrymandered than the current maps.

The federal court system historically has been involved in the process, being the entity that drew the maps in three of the last four redistricting processes. The federal level of the court system is better positioned to gather testimony, hear the case and make a decision than the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The US court system has set a timeline for briefings in late January and early February. This process would use a three-judge panel in their deliberations.

We do not have fair maps yet! The pressure is on the majority party and the Wisconsin Supreme Court to do the right thing. The best thing we can do is continue to contact our legislators and ask them to uphold the Governor's veto, write Letters to the Editor, ask our legislators for a meeting, or attend their office hours and tell them we want fair maps.

There are fair maps bills — SB 389 and AB 395 — that are stuck in committee. Ask for them to get a public hearing, because maps that are fair will help stop gridlock and help our government work.

References include: Mapped Out Podcast Episode 6 from WPR: <https://www.wpr.org/mappedout> • In Focus with Craig Gilbert (11-28-21): <https://spectrumnews1.com/wi/milwaukee/in-focus/2021/09/29/in-focus--journal-sentinel-s-craig-gilbert-explains-heated-redistricting-battle#> • Fair Maps Coalition Facebook Live event (11-23-21): <https://fb.me/e/1jRe5LrBu>

Census Precipitates Changes in Local Districts

By Jacqui Klimaszewski
Director, Voter Education & Turnout

While we are all concerned about the very important redistricting going on at the state level, the census has precipitated changes for Outagamie County Board districts and for many municipalities in the area.

County Information

Jeff King, **Outagamie County** Clerk indicated that some of the changes were due to increasing numbers north of the City of Appleton. The county districts have approximately 5,300 residents in each district. The new districts were approved November 9. Candidates are aware of the new boundaries, but most voters probably are not! Your county district may have changed, even though you have not moved. Voters will not be notified directly of the changes. So how do you know if you are affected? Here are two ways:

1. Go to myvote.wi.gov – These should be available by January 1, 2022.
2. Go to your County Website—Outagamie, Winnebago and Calumet County links are below:
 - Interactive **Outagamie County** Board District Map:
<https://ocgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d53262a357534e4c8906b09bcc2a319f> Use the final (green lines) and current (bright pink lines) buttons and find your location.
 - Listing of current **Winnebago County** maps and 2022 maps: <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/county-board/supervisory-districts>
 - **Calumet County** Revised supervisory-district maps: <https://www.calumetcounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/7865/Adopted-Final-Calumet-County-Supervisory-District-Plan>

Municipal Information

Kami Lynch, **City of Appleton** Clerk, indicated there are some significant changes for 2022 in districts and wards. While the number of Districts remains at 15, the wards went from 63 to 47. The district boundaries have also changed, although there are few changes in polling locations. The ideal population for each district is 5,045 and they attained that with a total deviation of 7.5%.

These changes mean that approximately 7,000 households will be affected by a change in ward, district and/or polling location. In January 2022, the City of Appleton will mail each of the affected households with information on the new district/ward. This is the link to the new districts/wards effective 1/1/22: <https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/24320/637716194153670000>

In Appleton the spring election will include the even numbered City Council seats; candidates for the open seats will file papers and collect nomination signatures from voters using the **New** maps. Changes should be turning up on MyVote.WI.gov in January.

Other municipalities in the Fox Cities **may** also have had some ward/district changes. To find out if there are changes that affect you, go to your municipality's website for any posted information or contact the clerk's office.

Our state League sponsors two meetings each year for members. In the summer, the annual meeting is held and every fall, there is the "Issues Briefing". In our new pandemic reality of virtual meetings, this meeting, once available primarily to League leaders, is accessible to all. Thanks to expert technical support provided by our LWV Appleton team (Dave Strange, Barb Kelly, and Michael Goodnight), you can view recordings of all the sessions listed below at this [link](#).

Keynote: Final Five Voting • A Continuing Conversation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion • The Truth about Election Processes • Empowering Voters in 2022 • The Youth Vote • Vote 411 • Legal Strategy to Combat Voter Suppression Laws • Update on the National Popular Vote Compact

Contribute to Democracy: Be a Poll Worker

By Jacqui Klimaszewski

Director, Voter Education & Turnout

Our entire election process hinges on a safe and secure election—which we have in Wisconsin thanks to our trained and dedicated poll workers. You can “Help the Community and Strengthen Democracy” by applying to be a poll worker! Training is available, and you will work with a committed team under the guidance and direction of the municipal clerk’s office.

If you're looking for a way to make an impact in 2022, [becoming a poll worker](#) is one of the most vital roles you can play. Being a poll worker means helping people vote safely and ensuring as many people as possible can cast their ballot. This also is a great opportunity for high school and college students to get involved with the democratic process. Together, we will help the voices of our community be heard!

In fact, the City of Appleton may also need assistance with registering Lawrence students and with working with nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

To be a poll worker, you must:

- Be a qualified elector of the county in which the municipality is located (i.e., an adult citizen of the United States who has resided in the election district for at least 28 consecutive days and is not otherwise disqualified to vote).
- Be able to read and write fluently in the English language.
- NOT be a candidate for any office to be voted on at the polling place at that election.
- Be at least 18 years old (except high school student poll workers who can be 16 or 17).

What will I do?

Poll workers check-in voters, help people register to vote, check photo IDs, and process absentee ballots. Your local clerk will provide you with training prior to Election Day for the job you will be doing.



How do I sign up?

To sign up, anyone interested should visit the Find your municipal clerk and express your interest in being a poll worker at this link: <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Become-PollWorker>. Just type in your information to let your local clerk know that you are interested in becoming a poll worker.

To sign up in Appleton, use the website below. They are extending the deadline until **December 15**: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/appletonwi/jobs/3273178/seasonal-election-inspector?page=2&pagetype=jobOpportunitiesJobs>

Fun Follow-Up to Civil Discourse

Here is an offering from Open Minds Platform. It can work for any holiday or social gathering. Try it; it's quick and fun!

OpenMind's [Thanksgiving Conversation Simulator](#) teaches three science-backed tips for having more constructive dialogue this holiday. In 10 minutes, you'll learn how to navigate difficult topics and practice with a personalized simulated conversation.

“Our goal is to equip people with practical strategies to navigate Thanksgiving skillfully, so that the holiday is memorable for the right reasons,” says Caroline Mehl, co-founder and executive director of OpenMind.

Try The Simulator

Here's a one-page guide: <https://openmindplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Takeaway.pdf>

Partnerships Aim to Engage Young Voters

Brian Post, Director of Voter Registration

There's an old adage in change management – helping organizations adopt new behaviors - “do it with them, not to them”. A big part of our mission is getting young people to adopt a voting behavior. To do that, we have two initiatives in the local high schools that we hope we can be successful with and expand in the future.

At Appleton North, we are once again partnering with the Student Marketing program as a client for a student. The student is earning credit by developing and executing marketing campaigns aimed at high school seniors who are eligible to vote to register and participate in our democracy. He has some exciting ideas currently in development that speak to his peer groups, what they like, how they consume media. We'll share some of those campaigns in upcoming newsletters.

At Appleton East, we are engaging with the Key Club in an effort to have them include encouraging registration and voting as a part of their club mission and activities. If successful, this would become a self-sustaining part of what the club does. We'll be supporting this effort with training and making connections with non-partisan non-profit efforts such as The Civic Center which provides templates, materials, and messaging aimed at high school 18 year-olds. Working with these young people is inspiring and invigorating!

Guidance Document Explains Land Acknowledgements

By Jeanne Roberts, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The concept of land acknowledgements has gained popularity in the past years, but what exactly is a land acknowledgement and why is it important? An ad hoc committee of the Community Alliances Committee of LWVWI made up of both Native and non-Native peoples worked for several weeks to come up with a guidance document to help local Leagues understand the whys, whens and hows of land acknowledgements.

Land acknowledgements have been used by Native Peoples and more recently non-Native people to recognize Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands on which we now live. Land acknowledgments are derived from a historic tradition held in high regard between sovereign tribal nations, pre-contact to the present.

To be truly respectful to native peoples and honor their history and sovereign status, it is important as an organization that we pair our words with action. Without combining action that benefits Native communities with action from our League, the land acknowledgement can become rote and lose meaning. It is important to remember that land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current, ongoing process that needs to be recognized.

You can read the entire guidance document to get more information at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13z6wr4xqYZv-43t7qyIM2mZae5IRdZhuL8-8VSDCNXo/edit>

You Can Get The FYI on DEI

By Renee Gralewicz, Vice President, Programs

Our DEI healthcare study is taking shape as we have FIFTEEN excellent volunteers working on the structure now. We intend to have a few large group meetings starting in January when we'll have local experts explaining their healthcare offerings and challenges. I'll be sure to send on invitation to all League members just in case you're interested in knowing what is offered in our area. Small team efforts will continue to investigate specific issues.

No one is going to be asked to do all of the research. If you have interest and want to join us in this exploration, please contact me on email at reenegralewicz@gmail.com.

ACTION: ARPA Presents Opportunity for League

By Jan Quinlan, Action Vice President

You have undoubtedly heard *something* about the American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA. This economic stimulus package passed by Congress in March 2021 includes substantial aid to local governments for every Wisconsin city, town, and village, and all counties. For example, the City of Appleton stands to receive \$14.9 million and Outagamie County \$36 million in ARPA funding in the next three years.

What you may not realize is what a golden opportunity ARPA presents for our local League of Women Voters.

The United States Treasury Department outlined allowable uses for ARPA funding including public health, economic impact, infrastructure, lost public sector revenue, pay for essential workers, and serving the hardest hit populations and their families. However, each local government is on their own to determine exactly how to determine priorities and projects within that over-arching framework.

Outagamie County developed a vision for their Rescue Plan implementation which “advances safety, health and opportunity for all within our communities with a focus on those most harmed by COVID-19.” The County engaged a broad group of community stakeholders in their 2021 process of determining priorities and they promise to continue seeking input from a wide range of community members.

The City of Appleton set out guiding principles for their use of ARPA funding which include, among other things, transparency, collaboration/coordination with neighboring municipalities and other levels of government -- and “community input to serve as a guiding force.” In fact, Appleton’s 2022 budget includes money for “process development, community input facilitation, and ongoing compliance activity” to accomplish their ARPA goals.

This is where our local League comes in: helping with community input, especially in those areas we have studied (housing, mental health, child care, climate, etc.) where the most vulnerable may not have a voice.

Our local League’s long history of observing and participating in local government already garnered 2021 invitations to help with community input through stakeholder-listening sessions with County staff, the Mayor of Appleton, and others. In 2022 Appleton and Outagamie County promise to continue facilitating strong community input -- staying loyal to their stated principles for ARPA decision-making. Other counties, towns, and municipalities are weighing their own ARPA decisions within elected committees and governing bodies in various ways.

Now more than ever before -- League’s local Observer Corps can make a positive difference in our community. Our “ARPA Call to Action” is to ramp up our Observer Corps to ensure all our cities’, towns’ and counties’ priorities stay true to the mission of the American Rescue Plan Act.

Interested in jumping into this community-input process? Contact Jan Quinlan by emailing jldquinlan@gmail.com and we will find a great way for you to make a real long-lasting contribution to ARPA decisions.

‘Snow People’ Usher in Coming Events

By Renee Gralewicz, VP Programs

Ahhh, the beauty of snow people!! I am looking forward to when they make themselves at home for a few months. They light up the dark days and keep our plants warm and moist throughout the cold winter. Instead of complaining about things we cannot control, let’s look at what they offer us instead of what they take away from us. Alas, COVID-19 continues to make its presence known and demonstrate its strength. While it continues its work, many of us too have grown and strengthened.

For example, most of us now better appreciate the joys of seeing someone in person! The virtual life has been wonderful as we connected to more people around the world and learned new things –

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Ushering in Coming Events, continued

in a relatively inexpensive manner. Though the world has another deadly COVID-19 variant which has not yet reached Wisconsin in high numbers, we are still planning to gather in one place for our Annual Holiday Brunch. Michiels will be our caterer and Voices of Hope our program highlight at Bubolz Nature Preserve. Perhaps we can share a hug or two.

Please save the following dates:

- December 11, 2021 (Saturday, 9:30 - noon at Bubolz Nature Preserve) – Annual Holiday Brunch with performances by Voices of Hope
- January 22, 2022 (Saturday) – Lively Issues (virtual) **[Note the date change!]**
- February 7, 2022 (Monday, 7:00 – 8:30) – Legislative Town Hall (virtual)
- February 21, 2022 (Monday) – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Study Update
- March 21, 2022 (Monday, 5:00 – 6:30 Copper Rock Coffee) – (Multicultural) Local Women Business Leaders
- April 18, 2022 (Monday, 5:00 – 6:30 Copper Rock Coffee) – Asian American and Pacific Islanders Heritage Celebrations
- May 21, 2022 (Saturday, Pullmans at Trolley Square) – Annual Meeting

‘Train’ the Member Spotlight on Brian Post



✓ Husband (42 years, wife Diane)

✓ Father (3 adult children)

✓ Grandfather (3 surviving grandchildren, 1 no longer with us).

✓ No longer working for a living. My 38-year career with K-C spanned from tow motor driver and union official to corporate training, organizational design and development and change management in the Information Technology function.

Current roles: Co-Director Voter Services/Registration, LWV Appleton; Planning team member for a loose national network on Civil Discourse.

Why is LWV important to me? I’ve always had in mind to serve some civic duty role at this stage in my life. I spent 2016 as the steering committee chair for the newly formed Citizen Action cooperative of NE Wisconsin. In that role, I became keenly aware that progressive change in our democracy can only come through citizens actually voting. In 2017 I became active with LWV Appleton as part of the Voter Services team. In 2019 I accepted the role of Co-Director and joined the Board of Directors.

Public polling on all major issues of the day indicates large majorities favoring progressive action. Yet legislative action has been almost non-existent. Election participation is typically ~50% of eligible voters in presidential elections and often less than that for other offices. That means some 25% of the eligible voters are determining the course of our country. It stands to reason that if only a small number of eligible voters started to vote, we could realize the unity and action our country desires.

That is a doable and worthy effort in my opinion. The LWV mission aligns perfectly.

My hobbies include downhill skiing, reading, running a little each week and a lifetime of lousy golfing. My wife Diane is a silversmith, creating and selling jewelry at craft fairs. I enjoy being head schlepper and site manager for her.

I taught rational thinking as part of my career and understanding cause before taking action is a key component of that. One of my quests has been to understand the differences driving political polarization in our communities and families. I’ve just finished re-reading “The Republican Brain” by Chris Mooney. He provides many useful and well-documented insights.

Our middle daughter, husband and 3 children live in Munich, Germany, so we make regular trips there. Everyone should have a trip to Oktoberfest on their list of life experiences!