



FEBRUARY 2022

Co-Presidents' Message: Resolve to Take Action



By Co-Presidents Linda Bjella and Marti Hemwall

February.



What comes to mind? Black History Month? Ground Hog Day? Probably the first thing you thought of was Valentine's Day on February 14th. That date is also the birthday of the League of Women Voters, which was founded in 1920. We continue to reinvent ourselves as we mark our 102nd year. We have always been nonpartisan, but now have fully embraced diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do. And we are reaching out to young people like never before. Our local League is also evolving and embracing the future.

- We have a new name — **League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities** — that will bring us more opportunities to make a positive difference in our greater community.
- We have a new website — LWV Appleton-Fox Cities.org — designed and built by Dave Strange with help from Barb Kelly. Our Communications Director Kathy Voigt coordinated with the Board to refine and hone the copy and images. If you haven't taken a look at it yet, please do. It is world class, and represents countless hours of work over the past year. We think it will become a go-to resource for our members and the community that will provide comprehensive and up-to-date information about elections, public policy issues, and more. It shows the incredible amount of work our League is doing and ways we can all be great advocates.

We always begin our League year with our **Lively Issues** meeting. We love this meeting because it gives our members a chance to suggest what issues and concerns should be the focus of our League's attention and advocacy in the coming year. It's also a meeting that reminds us of the broad knowledge and dedication among our members. So many of you make a positive difference in our community and beyond every day, and collectively you make our League a strong and respected force for good government.

Since we have an ongoing study on equity in health care in the Fox Cities area, Lively Issues participants brought forward a wide variety of other topics. Below is a list of the major ones mentioned. Which of these issues is most important to you? Let us know, and we'll help you get involved. And if you missed Lively Issues, and want to add to the list, please let us know!

Continued on page 2

Resolve to Take Action, continued

DEI work

- Review all existing positions through a DEI lens
- Apply a "COVID lens" to our positions
- Networking with minority organizations and businesses

Climate change

- Changing energy sources and lifestyles
- Appleton as a carbon-neutral city
- Use of ARPA funds for sustainability

Schools

- SROs (school police resource officers): discipline referrals, truancy, transparency
- Culturally responsive & inclusive curriculum
- Support for teachers and school boards and administrators
- Guns in schools

Childcare

- Accessibility and availability of childcare in our area
- Public transportation for childcare
- Extending the child tax credit
- Child well-being & health care, developmental milestones

Health care

- Suicide prevention & mental health
- Public transportation accessibility to services

- Use of ARPA funds for vulnerable populations
- Adult senior communities-quality of care, statistics

Voting rights

- Support for local election officials
- Who is most adversely affected by removal of ballot drop boxes
- Work with municipalities to ensure all can vote
- Voting integrity for future elections

Immigration in the Fox Cities

- How do we better integrate immigrant services? It is difficult to navigate.
- Refugee and resettlement services

Accessible and affordable housing Political polarization and civil discourse Racial disparities in jail and prison population Fair Maps

That is quite a list and it brings into focus what the coming year will look like for our organization. But in celebration of the League's birthday, we have another suggestion: Take time to look back at our history too. On our new website, under the "About Us" tab, you will find a complete list of all the League's position statements that have been developed over more than a century. It will make you proud to be a member!

League Membership is Hot! Hot! Hot!

By Cindy Falona, Membership Director

The weather outside is frightful, but League membership is off to a volcanic start. We had a very successful renewal drive. To add to this great news, January has brought us SIX new members!!

Our reputation is spreading. People who want to have an impact on the 2022 mid-term elections know that the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities is the place to be!

Help us keep this energy going by inviting a friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member to our monthly meetings. YOU are our best recruiter because you know the value of membership. Have a name of a person who is interested but wants to learn more? Send me the individual's email and I will reach out to them. Email me at membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

WELCOME!

Ann Johnson, Mary Klasen, Gordon Lind, Linda Scheffler, and John Thompson, all of Appleton, and **Constance Radtke** of Greenville

Midwinter Recap: Lively Issues, Upcoming Programs

By Renee Gralewicz, VP Programs

There are 13 moons in a calendar year. Peoples around the world named the moons based on their culture and geography. The Oneida call the February moon *Tsha'tekohselha*, which means *Midwinter Moon*. The idea that we are on the downside of winter brings hope as well as signals that it's time to start planning the summer gardens. February also brings us closer to the end of our League calendar year.

January's **Lively Issues** brought 38 of us together, and we generated a sizable list of important issues that may be considered for program topics or future study possibilities.

For those who couldn't make the meeting, click [HERE](#) for the video recording.

For a list of the issues presented, please click [HERE](#).

Please save the following dates.

- February 21 (Monday, 5:00-6:30 p.m.) – Consensus/DEI Study Update (virtual)
- March 21 (Monday, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.) – (Multicultural) Local Minority Business Leaders (virtual)
- April 18 (Monday, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.) – AAPI Heritage Celebrations (virtual)
- May 19 (Thursday, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.) – Annual Meeting [Pullmans at Trolley Square, 619 S. Olde Oneida St, Appleton, WI 54915]

League Airs AASD Candidate Interviews

The Appleton League of Women Voters has recorded interviews with each of the nine candidates who will appear on the February 15 primary ballot for the Appleton Area School District Board. Previously, the League provided live candidate forums via its website and live streamed on its Facebook page. Given the number of candidates on the primary ballot, the individual interviews were recorded ahead of time and may be viewed any time.

A link to all of the taped interviews is available on the League's website, lwvappleton.org, and include candidates Dave Moscinski, Mike Schinke, Jim Bowman (incumbent), Nick Ross, Pheng Thao, Andrea Klitzke, Deb Truymen (incumbent), James Bacon (incumbent), and Jason Kolpack. It should be noted that Bowman is a League member.

Questions that were posed to each of the candidates came from League members, the public, and students in the Appleton Area School District. Each candidate was asked the same questions, and given the same amount of time to respond to each. Details of the interview process, list of questions, and additional information on the topics mentioned in the interviews are on the website.

In March the League is planning virtual forums for contested races for the Appleton City Council, Town of Grand Chute Supervisors, and Outagamie County Supervisors. If you have questions for any of these races, please [submit](#) them to the League.

A special thanks goes to Mike Goodnight, Barb Kelly, and Dave Strange for all of their tech support to record and make these interviews available.

Legislative Town Hall Hosts Bipartisan Legislators

By Jan Quinlan, Vice President, Action

Four of our nine legislators agreed to participate on February 7, 2022 in our third Legislative Town Hall meeting - a wonderful improvement. Senator Andre Jacque, Representatives Lee Snodgrass, and Ron Tusler joined us and their constituents to discuss their priorities at the start of Wisconsin's 2022 Legislative Session. Jan Quinlan served as moderator for this virtual event. We hope this will be a regular opportunity for citizens to hear what their elected representatives are supporting in the legislature.

It takes a village to prepare for these Town Halls. Our League's Executive Action Team members brainstormed on [issues-oriented questions](#) while our League technical gurus Barbara Kelly and Michael Goodknight worked out the logistical details of the Zoom meeting. Special thanks to each of the above and to Linda Bjella and Penny Bernard-Schaber for their hard work and sound advice -- and to Renee Gralewicz and Kathy Voigt for their communications and outreach.

Appleton's Climate Task Force meets our own

The City of Appleton's Climate Task Force presented its final report to Mayor Woodford and the Common Council on Wednesday January 19, 2022 following two years of research and planning. Our League Climate Task Force also spent two years on this important and timely local study which culminated in detailed and extensive support positions we will use to advocate for climate adaptation and resiliency.

[Our League's public statement on Climate Resiliency](#) applauded the City Task Force's recommendations but encouraged higher prioritization for social justice especially for those in our most vulnerable populations. Extreme climate crises will demand collaboration and cooperation across all local government units for effective swift responses that can save lives. Thanks to Ligia Rivera and her committee for crafting this statement and for their continuing research on these crucial issues.

Fair Maps Rally at Houdini Plaza braves the weather

The bitter cold couldn't stop about 50 advocates for Fair Maps from rallying at Houdini Plaza on Friday January 21. LWV Appleton-Fox Cities Co-President Linda Bjella delivered a [strong non-partisan statement at the rally](#) describing how gerrymandering takes away the power of our votes and our voices which weakens our democracy. Our League co-hosted this event with a number of other organizations including the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition. Our goal was to join with 15 other rallies across the state to let our Wisconsin Supreme Court know that over 80% of Wisconsin residents support Fair Maps and a non-partisan process for redistricting.

Black Women Helped Win Voting Rights for All Women

By Jeanne Roberts, DEI Director

February is Black History Month, so we decided to spend a little time celebrating just a few of the strong Black women who have helped all of us win our rights, but who have not gotten the credit due to them. I'm going to highlight the lives of six Black women who worked to assure our right to vote.

Frances E.W. Harper was a prolific writer and abolitionist who became known as the "bronze muse". She later became one of the most articulate advocates for women's rights, racial equality and temperance.

Lucie Wilmot Smith promoted woman suffrage in the Black press and the Black community during the late 1800's. She was a faculty member at the University of Louisville and wrote articles that were often reprinted, and kept women's equality and related issues before Black readers throughout the country.

Continued on page 5

Strong Black Women Helped All, continued

Maria Louise Baldwin was a widely admired teacher and club woman who promoted equal rights. At age 33 she became the principal of the interracial Agassiz Grammar School. The president of Harvard, Charles Eliot, called her the best teacher in New England.

Naomi Talbert Anderson was considered one of the strongest Black voices in the woman suffrage movement during the late 19th century. A pioneer within the Black women's club movement, she believed that "woman has a power within herself."

Adella Hunt-Logan was an educator and writer who organized suffrage activity among Black women at Tuskegee Institute. In 1913 she encouraged Black women to march in the suffrage parade in Washington, DC after reading that it was to be segregated, and believed that one reason that Black women should try to organize other Black women was that white women were never going to do it.

Verina Morton-Jones was a pioneering physician and a leading club woman in Brooklyn. In the words of historian Thea Arnold, Morton-Jones "fought to win the vote for all women and fought to protect the right to vote of all Black Americans". *

My friend Karen once told me that Black women fought for all women's right to vote knowing that this right would not apply to them. And it wasn't until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that Black women and other women of color actually had their right to vote protected. Right now, voting rights are seriously under attack and it is up to us to make sure that those attacks don't succeed.

**Information taken from Winning the Vote – The Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement – Robert P.J. Cooney, Jr.*

Watch for communications from 'Club Express'

We have chosen to use Club Express, a website and management tool recommended by the national League of Women Voters. Members will receive an email from Club Express in the next few days that will explain how to access our new website and set up your membership account.

Be sure to open this email when it arrives. Following the directions is important because by doing so, you will be able to get Members Only information and be included in our membership directory. Please stay tuned and be alert to communications that mention Club Express.

'Want Ads' for Those Who Want to Do More

—Observers Wanted—

As our membership grows, the Observer Corps seeks new eyes and ears to follow local government. Volunteer from the comfort of your home. Learn more [Here](#).

Got Swag?

If you believe messaging is important and have a knack for crafting clever prose, our Fundraising Team would love to put it on a lapel button for our swag sales! The theme is **Voting** (must be non-partisan) and should fit on a 2 ½" button. Winners will receive a button with their slogan on it! Please email your name and slogan to suehop57@gmail.com by March 4, 2022.

— Treasurer's Note —

Letters regarding 2021 contributions to the League of Women Voters of Appleton (the League) were mailed on January 31, 2022. We'd like to call attention to how this might affect your tax filings. The League is a tax exempt, nonprofit organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Therefore, contributions to the League can be deducted as charitable contributions to the extent allowable when you file your 2021 tax return.

If you have any questions regarding the amount of your contributions or you didn't receive a letter, please contact our Treasurer, Diane Putzer, at treasurer@lwvappletonfoxcities.org