



APRIL 2024



## President's Message: Period of Transitions Prompts Appeal

By Linda Bjella  
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As our local League turns 85 this year, we find ourselves undergoing two big transitions.

### Transition #1: Appleton to Appleton-Fox Cities

In 2021, we officially became the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities, greatly expanding our outreach. Consider the work of our Voter Service Team: In the past year, there were 15 tabling events featuring our new colorful spinning wheel which attracts far more people to our table. This gives us an opportunity to engage with people of all ages as they answer our civics questions. A new voter registration project at the DMV logged 190+ volunteer hours and assisted nearly 150 people with voting and registration questions. We sponsored candidate forums and interviews this spring that attracted large crowds and the recordings had more than 300 YouTube views. In addition, there were 142 new users of Vote411.

More than 100 people logged in to our two virtual Town Halls with Fox Cities legislators and 132 people viewed the recordings. Nearly 4,000 people visited our website, and our Facebook page reached more than 5,600. Our observers have fanned out beyond Appleton and Outagamie County and more local governments are being held accountable as a result.

We sponsored programs on Local Law Enforcement, Government Accountability and Transparency, Environmental Justice, and Senior Housing. We had 90 attendees at our Holiday Brunch at Bubolz which featured a panel discussion on the Freedom to Read.

### Transition #2: a new membership system for LWV US

Beginning in January 2025, all dues will be collected by the LWV US and then divided: 33% to national, 47% to state, and 20% to local leagues. This means that we must rely on our spring finance drive to provide us with enough money to adequately fund our increasingly ambitious activities throughout the Fox Cities.

Despite the fact that we are an all-volunteer organization, we do incur significant expenses that are not covered by dues alone. By now you should have received our annual spring fund drive letter. You may be a bit shocked by our ambitious goal of \$10,000. However, thanks to a very generous matching-grant donation of \$5,000 from one of our members, your donations will be doubled this year.

Our greatest expense is for technology: website subscriptions, professional management, and security cost more than \$7,000 per year. We pay \$300 for our professional Zoom subscription. PayPal and

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## PRESIDENT: Ballot Referendums, cont.

Square Space charge us about \$400 for on-line payments. Rent for our office adds up to \$4,200 annually. We have budgeted \$1,000 for monthly programs (room rental, honorariums) and \$3,000 for voter service. All local Leagues must now pay for their own liability insurance which was previously provided by the state League. Our policy costs about \$1,500 per year.

Please consider making a donation by May 15. The easiest way is to click on our website: [lwvappletonfoxcities.org/donate](http://lwvappletonfoxcities.org/donate). Members have an option to set up recurring donations by logging into their member account. This provides our League with sustaining monthly or quarterly income and allows you to spread out your donation throughout the year. Of course, you can always mail in a check using the convenient response envelope included in our Finance Drive mailing.

Your investment in the League is an investment in our local community. Our quality of life improves when we have more informed and engaged citizens. And remember, all donations will be **DOUBLED** this year!  
— *Linda*

## ACTION: Get Ready for Consensus on Local Positions

By Jan Quinlan  
Vice President, Action  
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At our May 23 Annual Meeting, members will vote on the consensus recommendations about our local support positions. If you've been following along during the year, you know that a 16-person study committee has been thoroughly reviewing these positions with an eye toward our League's regional expansion and also our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Our March 18th consensus meeting made two recommendations:**

1. Adopt a preamble to our LWV Appleton-Fox Cities support positions that can be used immediately following the annual meeting whenever our League takes advocacy. This preamble will expand our

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**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF APPLETON-FOX CITIES

### Ensure Your Gift Stays with Your Local League

LWV US will initiate a new shared dues structure in 2025. If you are considering making a gift and want your donation to support the Appleton-Fox Cities League directly, you may do so on our [website](http://lwvappletonfoxcities.org).

Simply log in to your Member account, and choose a one-time or recurring donation, either monthly or quarterly, to sustain our local League. Donations also may be made by check mailed to LWV Appleton-Fox Cities, PO Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912.

All donations to the League, a nonpartisan 501(c)3 organization, are tax deductible.

All contributions are greatly appreciated and help ensure that this League will continue to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy.

For more information, email [membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org)

## ACTION: Get Ready for Consensus, cont.

focus to the entire Fox Cities region and also articulate our dedication to diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect for all our citizens.

2. Accept the committee's assessment for changes needed in our support positions. These changes range from cross-referencing to language changes to recommendations for new studies. Due to the detailed work of this year's study committee, the list is long and quite specific.

### An important note about this consensus:

The precise changes to our support positions will be tackled by a task force *following* the annual meeting. This task force will use the assessment to update our entire local positions as recommended. They will present the specific changes to our Board and membership at a later date. That means our vote on May 18th will NOT include any specific changes to the local support positions beyond adoption of the preamble.

## PROGRAMS: Public Safety Is Recommended New Study

By Renee Gralewicz, Program Director

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It's wonderful to see the spring wildflowers bloom as well as the daffodils and tulips. Certainly, a sign of the end of winter and the start of gardening. Our League seasonal change is marked by the approval of a new study and study review recommendations. These two issues are on the agenda for the **Annual Meeting** which is **May 23**, Thursday at 5:00.

Our February Lively Issues meeting generated great discussions regarding our current positions on Local Police Protection (1973) and Regional Law Enforcement (1994). We agreed to generate a new study for 2024-2025. Our recommendation is to study Public Safety, the scope of which may include law enforcement in relation to the following:

- Use of technology and surveillance
- Community interaction (e.g. mental health, school liaison, culture and diversity)
- Regional agency coordination
- Fire departments and emergency services
- Drug enforcement
- Equipment and weapons
- Data collection and public dissemination

Public safety includes a vast array of issues and agencies. The study scope will be as broad or as focused as the people willing to help with the work determine is feasible.

You can join the study and participate in the areas that you are interested in and/or have experience with. If we have people who are interested in, for example, how the emergency services are engaged and how they respond, then that area of public safety can be covered. If you have an interest in one of the areas, please join the team.

Hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 24** (Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.) – **Book Share** to discuss **Erasure** by Percival Everett [Location: LWV AFC office, 120 N. Morrison Street, Appleton]

**May 23** (Thursday, 5:00 -8:00 p.m.) – **Annual Meeting** [Location: The Hillside at Plamann Park, 1375 E. Broadway Drive, Appleton]

## VOTER SERVICES: DMV Pilot Project Exceeds Estimates

**By Jacqui Klimaszewski**  
**Vice President, Voter Services**  
[voterservice@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:voterservice@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

It is going to be a busy summer and fall for Voter Registration Assistance events. We will need a lot of volunteers to cover them all. Here is just the beginning:

**Saturday, May 4: Wisconsin Grassroots Network** conference at Lawrence University, Warch Hall.

Sessions:

- 8:30-11:30
- 11:30-2:00
- 2:00-5:00

For more information on the event: <https://wigrassrootsnetwork.com/15th-Annual-Festival>

**Sunday, June 9: Juneteenth**, Jones Park, Sessions:

- 10:30 (set-up)- 1:00
- 1:00-3:30 (take-down)

**Tuesday, July 9 through Wednesday, July 24: DMV Voter Registration Assistance**

**Monday through Friday** shifts:

- 8:30-11:00
- 11:00-1:30
- 1:30-4:30

**Saturday** shift:

- 8:30-12:00

**Put these events on your calendar today and secure your place at the days and times that suit you by contacting Jacqui Klimaszewski at [voterservice@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:voterservice@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)** Training is available!!

Watch for signup emails from the League as more events will be scheduled throughout the summer and fall.

## MEMBERSHIP: Members Vital to the League

**By Cindy Fallona, Membership Director**  
[membership@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:membership@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

March did bring us wind but April showers are nourishing our gardens to produce brilliant spring flowers. Our membership as well is continually being nourished with new members.

*Please welcome: Alyssa Bolante from Appleton*

As a member, your financial support of our local League is critical to sustaining the work we do to educate, inform and assist voters, and study important community issues. To ensure that your contribution remains with our local League, visit [lwwappletonfoxcities.org/donate](http://lwwappletonfoxcities.org/donate) or mail a check payable to LWV Appleton-Fox Cities, PO Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912.

If you need to make any changes to your membership status such as address change, new phone or email, sign up for an event or make a donation, go to our website [lwwappletonfoxcities.org](http://lwwappletonfoxcities.org) You will need to log in with your membership password. Don't remember your password? The website allows you to obtain a new one. If you have any problems logging in, contact Cindy Fallona at [membership@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:membership@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

## DEI: Book Share Group Selects Novel ‘Erasure’

“**Erasure**” by Percival Everett is the next selection up for reading and discussion by the League’s DEI Book Share group. “Erasure” is the basis for the film “American Fiction,” and is one of many works by Everett, which include “James,” a retelling of “Huck Finn.” Follow these links to view recent interviews by PBS and CBS Sunday:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/james-1712095591/>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/writer-percival-everett-on-his-novel-james-race-and-language/>

The discussion will take place **Wednesday, April 24 at 4 p.m.** at the League office, 120 N. Morrison St., Appleton. It’s on the first floor and is accessible. All are welcome, so bring a friend!

For the next meeting, the group is considering focusing on Haiti and documentaries. The group also will be discussing other meeting times and formats to make it more accessible, so share your preferences. Suggestions welcome!

### Double Your Support of the League During the Spring Fund Appeal!

As it has for over a century, the League will be on the front lines in 2024 providing trusted nonpartisan information to cut through increasing amounts of mis- and dis-information. We will work overtime to ensure that every eligible voter who wishes to is registered, informed, and has a plan to vote.

Just as we’ve set ambitious goals for our work, we’ve set an ambitious goal for our Spring Fund Appeal. A member has generously offered a \$5,000 matching grant, so the impact of your gift will be doubled! All contributions are tax deductible.

Please support the important work of the League by making a contribution during the Spring Fund Appeal. Simply visit our website, [lwvappletonfoxcities.org](http://lwvappletonfoxcities.org) and select Donate. Contributions also may be made payable to LWVAppleton-Fox Cities, and mailed to PO Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912. As always, your support is greatly appreciated!

