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JUNE/JULY 2024



President's Message: Taking a Laser Focus Moving Forward

By Linda Bjella
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Late spring is a time to both look back at all we have accomplished together and to look forward to the coming year when we will be laser-focused on the upcoming presidential election.

LOOKING BACK:

- We sponsored meaningful programs on a variety of issues: local law enforcement, open government and open meetings, the freedom to read, affordable senior housing, and we partnered with the PAC to provide a program and workshop on race, class, and community awareness.
- We hosted two virtual Legislative Town Halls with Fox Cities legislators, partnering with the Winnebago and Greater Green Bay Leagues.
- Our Action Team provided timely alerts to our members on national, state, and local issues of concern. Our League delivered official statements to the Appleton Common Council, the Outagamie County Board, and the Grand Chute Town Board. The Executive Action Team brought together a group of highly engaged local volunteers whose interests and expertise span a wide spectrum of important issues.
- Our Events Team planned our Holiday Brunch at Bubolz that attracted 90 people, and our Annual Meeting at The Hillside at Plamann Park that was attended by 60.
- Our Communications and Technology Team continues to raise the profile of our League through outstanding newsletters, full-color brochures and posters, continuous website updates and improvements, increased attention to our League by local media, and further development of swag items.
- A committee of 17 people conducted a comprehensive review of all of our League's local positions developed over our 85-year history, identifying those positions most in need of critical updates.
- Our exemplary, dynamic Voter Services Team logged over 190 volunteer hours in voter assistance, candidate forums and interviews, and Vote411.

(Continued on page 2)

President: Laser Focus in Coming Year, cont.

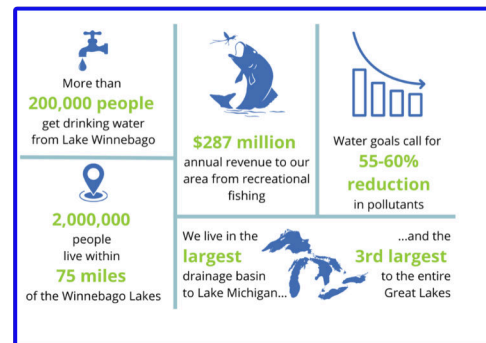
- Our Membership Team continued to extend our outreach to the greater Fox Cities metro area. In addition to Appleton, we now extend our reach to Freedom, Kimberly, Little Chute, Grand Chute, Menasha, Neenah, Hortonville, Harrison, Shiocton, Kaukauna, Larson, Ogdensburg, Clintonville, and Greenville, as they are also represented among our members. This year, we welcomed members from Waupaca, Larson, and New London.
- We explored DEI-themed books through a monthly book share. The DEI Team completely redesigned and updated its webpage, and increased our participation as allies with other local organizations focused on people who are marginalized in our community.
- As we transition to a new dues model, our Finance Committee conducted a successful spring finance drive that exceeded our goal of \$10,000. As a result, our League will not have to use any reserve funds for our work in the coming year.

LOOKING FORWARD:

- Our primary focus will be on our Voter Service Team which will be tabling at many events throughout the summer and into the fall. This will include three sessions of multiple days at the DMV where many volunteers will be needed.* This project has been highly successful at reaching a broad cross-section of people who often are not engaged in the democratic process. In next spring's election, we will again be called upon to provide voters with critical information on candidates running for local offices. The spring election will also include a hugely consequential election for a new Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice.
- We will begin work on a new study to update our fifty-year old position on police protection, delving into the broader topic of public safety. We will examine this issue from a Fox Cities regional and DEI perspective. Here too, many volunteers will be needed, and there is no better way to learn about a public policy issue than a League study. Our resulting positions make a meaningful positive difference in our community.
- When the calendar turns over to 2025, our Action Team will really gear up. We will follow municipal, county and state budget development through a new legislature elected with fair maps for the first time in 15 years. This will be an exciting new era for the Fox Cities where the senate and assembly maps have significantly changed.
- Our Events Team is now working currently planning our Summer Picnic at 1000 Islands Nature Center in Kaukauna. This fun social event will also be an opportunity to provide an introduction to League for prospective new members. We will provide the brats and burgers. Bring a dish to pass and a friend!

As you can see, the work of our League is truly a TEAM EFFORT! There are so many ways for you to get involved. Raise your hand, and one of our team leaders will call on you!

How healthy is Lake Winnebago?
ESTHER's Environmental Justice Task Force invites you to learn about this source of drinking water for 3.4% of Wisconsin residents at a 7 p.m. Zoom program on June 25. Dr. Bart T. De Stasio, Professor of Biological Studies at Lawrence University, will be featured with a presentation titled "The Health of Lake Winnebago." There will be time for Q&A with this expert on fresh water environments. To join the Zoom, use this program link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84878940801...>



Multi-League Info: Get to Know New Legislative Districts

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Do you know what your new state assembly and senate districts are?

Do you know who will be on the ballot in the August 13 primary and November 5 general election?

Has your polling place changed?

You will be able to find out the answers to all these questions at a nonpartisan informational meeting on **Thursday, July 11** at the **Neenah Public Library**. The meeting will be held in the Shattuck Room from **6:30-8:00 p.m.** It is jointly sponsored by the Leagues of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities, Winnebago County, and Wisconsin.

League leaders and members of the Fair Maps coalition will explain the dramatic changes in local legislative districts. Maps of the former districts and the new districts will be available.

The new Wisconsin legislative maps, which are the result of a 15-year campaign against the practice of gerrymandering, will make our legislators more accountable to their constituents. Information on the next steps toward a permanent nonpartisan process for redistricting also will be discussed.

State legislative candidates in the Fox Valley area will be invited to attend and asked to make a short statement introducing themselves to voters. This event will not be a candidate forum.

VOTER SERVICE: Here's Your Chance to Take Action!

By Jacqui Klimaszewski
Vice President, Voter Services
voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

With so many issues facing us, members are always looking for concrete ways to TAKE ACTION. Here's a great opportunity to make a difference in the upcoming election!

WHAT: A Voter Registration Training on Zoom for League members as well as friends/neighbors interested in registration assistance. It will take the confusion out of the process...and answer all our questions!

WHO: Brian Post from the League of Women Voters will lead the training.

WHEN: Wednesday, June 19 at 10:00 a.m. It usually takes about an hour.

WHY: The League of Women Voters has numerous registration assistance events throughout the summer and fall. We also need volunteers to help with registration at the DMV and other community events.

NEXT STEP: Contact Brian Post at 6615@sbcglobal.net to RSVP, and you will receive the Zoom link. Let's show up to help make democracy work!

Upcoming Voter Registration Assistance Events:

- **June 25, 3:00-7:00 p.m.** – UWO Fox Cities Campus Open House, "Explore. Experience. Learn;" part of the City of Menasha's Sesquicentennial Celebration
- **July 20** — Celebrate Diversity Picnic at Smith Park in Menasha
- **July 9-24** — DMV schedule: Sessions Monday through Friday, 8:30-11:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 1:30-4:30 p.m., as well as Saturdays from 8:30 a.m.-12 noon
- **July 27 and August 24** — Appleton Farm Market

There are additional events being planned. If you know of a location or organization that would like assistance with voter registration, please contact J. Klimaszewski at voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org.

SPRING FUND APPEAL: A Sincere Thank You to All

THANK YOU to all who have donated to the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities. We are pleased to report we have exceeded our goal of \$10,000! This means our League volunteers will have the resources needed to carry out our mission to empower voters and defend democracy in our community.

Look for our table at the Appleton Farm Market and other community events throughout the Fox Cities. We'll be the ones with the colorful wheel. Test your civics knowledge and win a prize! PLUS you'll get the best NONPARTISAN information on upcoming elections.

While we are extremely grateful for all of the contributions received during the formal fund appeal, donations are always welcome and needed to sustain our important work in the community now and in the future. Click the DONATE button on our website anytime to contribute using a major credit card or through PayPal, or mail your check to P.O. Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912.

These Generous Gifts Support the League Mission

\$1000+

Mark Scheffler Fund for a Sustainable Society

\$500+ Linda & Rick Bjella John & Patty Brogan Diane Putzer	Gayle Hardt Marti Hemwall & John Peterson Barbara Kelly Mary Klasen Gordon Lind Stephanie Malaney Patti Clark-Stojke Kathy Voigt Sue Waltman Claire Wheelan	Katie Gribble Marcia Hittle Nancy Jones Jacqui Klimaszewski Faith Mauk Tami McLaughlin Vicky Milde Nadine Miller Amy Nasr Jackie Nider Patricia Osmuss Deb Otteson Nancy Pourciau Cheryl Rivera Ligia Rivera Jeanne Roberts April Savage Mary Sullivan
\$250+ Miriam Douglass Cindy Fallona Sue Kinde Lesley McKee Joy Perry Jan Quinlan Penny Bernard Schaber Shirley Strange	\$50+ Sue Abrahamson Kristin Dassler-Alfeim Lois Bressette Bonnie Buchanan Donna Clementi Bruce Companik Sara Companik Donna Cook Cookie Fielkow LouAnn Graf	Other Theresa Spoehr Deb Werth
\$100+ Shirley Adams Karla Blumerich Linda Crowley Rick & Sue Detienne Marcia Engen Beth English Denise Fenton		

ANNUAL MEETING: Tackling a New Study, Voter Service



By Linda Bjella, President
president@lwwappletonfoxcities.org

The new Hillside pavilion at Plamann Park provided a beautiful setting for our Annual Meeting on May 23. Following a festive meet and greet complete with live music provided by Rick Bjella and a delicious buffet supper catered by Michiels, members turned their attention to the business meeting.



After a year-long review of our positions through a DEI and Fox Cities regional lens, the following preamble to our positions was adopted:

Our local League chapter was founded in 1939. Over many decades, we focused on Appleton and Outagamie County, conducting studies to develop our local positions. Our League has grown along with the increasingly diverse Fox Cities region, and in 2021, officially became the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities. In order to expand our outreach and influence and to maintain current and future relevancy, we hereby adopt this preamble to our positions document.



The League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities is committed to strengthening our communities by empowering individuals and groups to better engage with their government. Whether explicitly stated or not, the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities affirms that our local governments, commissions, and advisory committees must reflect the diversity of our communities and uphold the right of every individual to live a healthy and authentic life with a sense of belonging, respect, and acceptance. We intentionally advocate with, and for all to be treated with dignity, including those who are marginalized, stereotyped, misunderstood, or intentionally ignored.



In addition, a task force will be appointed to further review and organize our existing positions to make them more accessible and relevant. Future new studies may be required in some areas.



A new comprehensive study on public safety was adopted for the coming year. A committee will delve into all areas of public safety inclusive of the Fox Cities metro area. This will require a group of dedicated volunteers, so watch for further information to become part of this exciting project.



Following a very successful spring finance drive that exceeded its goal of \$10,000, members voted to approve a budget for the new fiscal year of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. We expect our financial needs to be fully funded without using any reserves.



Finally, a new slate of officers was voted in. Joining the Board for the first time will be Miriam Douglass as Treasurer and Jan Smith as Program Director. Re-elected were Jacqui Klimaszewski as Vice-President of Voter Services and Kathy Voigt as Director of Communications and Technology. Board members continuing include Linda Bjella as President, Karin Alvarez as Secretary, Jan Quinlan as Vice-President of Action, Cindy Fallona as Director of Membership, and April Savage as Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Honored for their service were retiring members Treasurer Diane Putzer and Program Director Renee Gralewicz.

MEMBERSHIP: Invite Friends to LWV Summer Picnic

By Cindy Fallona

Membership Director

membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

Spring has sprung and that also pertains to the LWV of Appleton-Fox Cities growing membership. In April and May, five new members have been added. And once again, it is apparent why we added Fox Cities to our name. **Join me in welcoming —**

**Susan Van Lopik, Tami McLaughlin and Stefanie Montgomery of Appleton;
Sharon Bowen of Neenah, and Amy Nasr of Hortonville**

SUMMER PICNIC: INVITE A GUEST!

The League Picnic will take place on **July 18 at 1000 Islands Nature Center** in Kaukauna. The Membership Team urges each of you to use this event to invite a friend, neighbor, co-worker or family member to attend and see what the LWV of Appleton-Fox Cities is all about.

With the fall election approaching, we will be busy **empowering voters and defending democracy**. Everyone who volunteers will be helpful as we register voters, hold informational forums and provide non-partisan information on the candidates. Help with as few or as many of these opportunities as you are interested and able.

DEI: July 17 Book Share Caps Off Summer Activities

By April Savage

Director of DEI

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The DEI Team will take July and August off, resuming meetings on Tuesday, September 3, at 1 p.m. via Zoom. The Book Share will be the exception, as it will meet at the League office on July 17 at 1 p.m. to discuss the book "When We Walk By: Forgotten Humanity, Broken Systems and the Role We Can Each Play in Ending Homelessness in America" by Kevin Adler and Donald Burnes.

The team offers this informal list of upcoming community events, and welcomes additional entries to be sent to dei@lwvappletonfoxcities.org



The League participated in Juneteenth in partnership with the Alpha Phi Alpha chapter.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Ongoing —

- Hope & Help Together Opportunities: <https://www.hopeandhelptogether.com/>
- June is LGBTQ+2S Pride 2024 month
- July is Disability Pride month

6/9: Juneteenth: at Jones Park in Appleton, partnering with Alpha Phi Alpha 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

6/13: Celebrate Diversity/ Common Ground-Fox Valley Speaks: Housing Conversations, FVTC

6/17: LGBT Chamber of Commerce Pride Luncheon, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Fox Cities Stadium

6/22: Fox Valley Pride 2024 (formerly PrideFest)" <https://www.fvpride.org/>Riverside Park in Neenah

6/27-6/30: LWVUS Convention in Washington DC (also hybrid)

6/28: Casa Hispana Gala Dinner — scholars and sponsorships, 5:30 p.m. <https://casahispanawi.org/>

7/9-7/24: Voter Assistance at DMV

7/11: Fox Valley Fair Maps meeting at the Neenah Library (jointly sponsored by the Leagues of Appleton-Fox Cities, Winnebago County, and Wisconsin) 6:30-8:00 p.m.

7/18: Summer picnic at Thousand Islands Nature Center in Kaukauna, 5-8 p.m.

7/20: Celebrate Diversity Fox Cities Community Cookout at Smith Park in Menasha, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.8/13: 2024 Partisan Primary Election