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NOVEMBER 2024

∞ A Special Post-Election Message ∞

Dear fellow League members,

We thank you deeply for all you did this election year.

- You registered voters.
- You ensured citizens were informed about candidates and issues.
- You helped our municipal clerk's offices facilitate safe and secure elections.
- You supported voters' rights.
- You enhanced the League's mission, the one started with suffragists long before women had the right to vote in our nation. They fought back against injustices, and envisioned a more inclusive democracy.

Now is the time to breathe and regroup. Our League, our community, and our nation will need your perseverance in protecting our democracy in the days ahead.

What your own perseverance looks like is up to you – but please join us in continuing to carry out our important work. Now more than ever, we need you.

Forward,

Linda Bjella, President

Janice Quinlan, Action Vice President

Jacqui Klimaszewski, Voters Service Vice President

**Congratulations to WI State Legislators
Following the November 5 Election**



**Senate District 2
Eric Wimberger**



**Senate District 18
Kristin Alfheim**



**Senate District 19
Rachael Cabral-
Guevara**



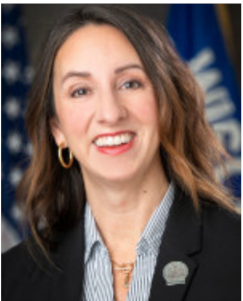
**Assembly District 2
Shae Shortwell**



**Assembly District 3
Ron Tusler**



**Assembly District 5
Joy Goeben**



**Assembly District 52
Lee Snodgrass**



**Assembly District 53
Dean Kaufert**



**Assembly District 55
Nate Gustafson**



**Assembly District 56
Dave Murphy**



**Assembly District 57
Lori Palmeri**



President's Message: Water the Grassroots

By Linda Bjella
president@lwwappletonfoxcities.org

Water the grassroots.

That's a phrase that keeps popping into my head following a month of observing local government budget deliberations juxtaposed against the troubling presidential election results.

Outagamie County

Let's take Outagamie County first. The [budget document](#) is more than 900 pages long. That's a lot of information to grasp, but thankfully, the Finance Committee holds six public hearings on each part of the budget. Department heads present an overview of the past year, their goals for the coming year, and their budget requests. As an observer of this process, you learn so much about all our county government does. It literally touches every aspect of our lives.

Thanks to observers Jan Quinlan, Nancy Jones, April Savage, and Jann Dreier, we were able to once again provide insights on this complicated and expansive budget. You can find a link to our statement to the Outagamie County Board about the budget process [here](#) and our later statement on the budget itself [here](#). There were several County Board Supervisors who responded to us, expressing gratitude that we attended the meetings along with praise for the League's steadfast engagement with local government.

City of Appleton

The City of Appleton began the adoption process of its 600+ page [2025 Budget](#) with a Mayor's Listening Session. This was followed by a Budget Saturday Finance Committee meeting, and finally a Public Budget Hearing. Here is the [City Budget Statement](#) that Jan Quinlan delivered on behalf of our League. This statement represents the observations of Nancy Jones, Jann Dreier, and Jan Quinlan.

Grand Chute

As a Grand Chute resident, I follow the deliberations of our five-member Town Board. It conducts three budget workshops which typically are each about three hours long. I was able to attend two workshops virtually, and the third via the audio recording and minutes. Again, listening to each department highlight their accomplishments, goals, and budget requests is a window into the comprehensive work of local government. The [budget](#) is posted on the website, and a public hearing is held where any resident can make a statement to the Board. I was the only one to make a [statement](#) at that hearing.

Following that budget hearing, a regular Town Board meeting was held during which six new firefighter paramedics were sworn into service. With their families proudly looking on, they each swore an oath to the Constitution of the United States, the State of Wisconsin, and the Town of Grand Chute. For me, after absorbing the outcome of our recent presidential election, that ceremony was therapeutic. It gave me hope. America is still America.

The next four years will be hard, but we can continue the good work of the League as we have always done here in our own community, engaging with the public servants, our friends and neighbors, who give of their time and talent to make our local governments work for all of us. We demonstrate that we appreciate what they do when we show up at meetings, and we also let them know when we disagree with what they are doing, too. But we can't do that unless we have observers to attend meetings.

Observer Corps

Would you like to join us? Let us know if you would like to become part of our Observer Corps watchdogs. Email Jan Quinlan at action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org if you're interested. You will be

(Continued on page 4)

PRESIDENT: Water the Grassroots, cont.

asked to monitor the agendas regularly, attend local government meetings as you are able, and read the minutes when you can't attend. You just listen and take notes, learn a lot, then report to Jan with any notable developments. With the exception of the Outagamie County Board*, all local government meetings can be attended virtually from home now. Your observations will help inform our League when issues arise that require our president to make a statement of support or opposition. This makes a difference in local government. YOU can make a difference in local government.

And right around the corner, Governor Evers will send his proposed biennial budget to our newly sworn-in, more balanced legislature. That state budget will be enormously important in all of our lives for the next two years. We will all be watching, learning, and looking for more bi-partisan cooperation this year.

So, do you need some local and state government therapy? Come help us water the grassroots!

— Linda

* The Outagamie County Board is working on providing virtual access to its meetings which we hope will be in place within the next year.

ACTION: Observer Corps Tackles Local Budgets

By Janice Quinlan
Action Vice President
action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org

Budgets drive policies and services. That is why our local League has followed the City, Town, County, and School District budgets in October for many years — and why we always try to make a public League statement during budget hearings. This year was no exception with Outagamie County, Appleton, and Grand Chute budget meetings.

Outagamie County

Our public statements to Outagamie County came in two installations this year. Our first League statement at the Outagamie County Public Budget Hearing on October 22 spoke to the process of budget presentations and adoptions. We applauded a new budget document with narratives that outline accomplishments and objectives for the future year. We were critical of the timing of the public hearing and the lack of public access to any of the budget meetings by livestream or recording.

Our second League public statement to Outagamie County was in the form of an emailed letter sent to each supervisor. In that letter, we included a long list of services and policies we support based on our League's local support positions. Thanks to Linda Bjella, Nancy Jones, April Savage, and Jann Dreier for joining me in observing Outagamie County's six budget presentations.

City of Appleton

In mid-October, Mayor Woodford held a Budget Listening Session in Council Chambers at which he presented an overview of his Executive Budget. This is the budget that is compiled with staff input and submitted to the Council's Finance Committee to amend or adopt.

November 2 was "Budget Saturday," when the entire City Budget was presented to the Finance Committee for their amendments or approval. At this daylong meeting, City Directors present their department budgets and respond to questions in succession. On Wednesday, November 6, we delivered our League statement at the Appleton Public Budget Hearing, the only public statement given by anyone this year.

Thanks to Nancy Jones and Jann Dreier for joining me in these City budget presentations.

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ACTION: Observers Tackle Local Budgets, cont.

Town of Grand Chute


Grand Chute's budget workshops are also in October, presented in two sessions. Their Public Budget Hearing was held on Thursday, November 7, at which we presented our public statement. Great thanks to Linda Bjella for single-handedly observing Grand Chute's budget workshops this year, and writing our League's Grand Chute public budget statement.

Appleton Area School District

The Appleton Area School District does their budget presentation, hearing, and adoption all in one night due to an extremely tight timeline. Wisconsin school districts get their official attendance counts in mid-October, which drives per pupil shared revenues; then they need to pass a final budget by November 1 to comply with state statutes. Although I did observe the AASD Board of Education budget meeting, we did not make a public statement this year.

Those of us who observe these local governments truly enjoy the process. Overall, we are impressed with the staff expertise and professionalism. Plus we learn so much about how these local governments help all of us in our daily lives. This is on full display during budget presentations, which cover the wide range of local government services in our community.

Interested in joining our Observer Corps? Please contact Jan Quinlan at action@lwvappletonfoxcities.org



Jane Kirschenheiter Zimmerman
ISSUES BRIEFING 2024

THURS, NOVEMBER 14TH
JUSTICE MATTERS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

SAT, NOVEMBER 16TH
JUSTICE MATTERS IN OUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM

TUES, NOVEMBER 19TH
JUSTICE MATTERS FOR THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

LWV of Wisconsin is hosting its annual Issues Briefings during November. The three sessions will explore what justice means for key populations in Wisconsin, including Native/Indigenous peoples and lands, unfair judicial sentencing practices, and discriminative legislation targeting the LGBTQIA+ community. There is no fee to register, and all are welcome.

The three sessions include:

Justice Matters for Native Americans: Thursday, November 14

Justice Matters in Our Judicial System: Saturday, November 16

Justice Matters for the LGBTQIA+ Community: Tuesday, November 19

View the [Issues Briefing Hub here](#) to see a full agenda, speaker bios, and to [register](#).

VOTER SERVICES: Despite Rhetoric, LWV Is Trusted

By Kathy Voigt
Director, Communications/Technology
info@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

Despite recent campaign rhetoric intended to discredit the League of Women Voters' nonpartisan foundation, voter engagement indicated otherwise.

"The League has been staunchly nonpartisan since its founding more than 100 years ago," says LWV of Appleton-Fox Cities President Linda Bjella. "Every time we help someone register to vote, or we answer questions about the voting process, or how to find their polling place; that underscores our commitment to empowering voters and defending democracy."

The League of Women Voters is nonpartisan, and does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. It stands equally on the pillars of being nonpartisan and committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Sept. to Oct.
533

During the season leading up to the November election, more than in most earlier cycles, the Appleton-Fox Cities League has remained nonpartisan while assisting record numbers of people across the age spectrum register to vote or update their registration status. As a result of expanded outreach, **League volunteers assisted more than 530 individuals!** A special pride point is the number of 18 year-olds assisted by League volunteers to register for the first time.

In a unique collaboration with the Appleton office of the DMV, the **League assisted 430** update their registrations or register to vote — all of this between mid-September and mid-October. More than **35 volunteers** were stationed at the DMV voting kiosk over **19 days** for a total of **240 volunteer hours**.

Some of those assisted said it best. "I can do DMV *and* register to vote? 2 for 1 – yea!" And " Oh, we're so glad you're here. We were wondering how we would register to vote." Or "I was having problems with the kiosk. if you weren't here, I would've given up and gone home." And most crediting, "Thanks so much for being here – I hope you keep coming here!"

From the League perspective, one volunteer summed it up best. " We have been searching for a way to reach voters from all walks of life, and I think we have found it."

DMV
430

19
days

240
Vol.
Hours

18 yr. old
1st Time
Voters
67

High
Schools
6

Beyond the DMV project, outreach at **six area high schools** — including training peer-to-peer volunteers — resulted in **67 newly registered 18 year-old voters**.

That's not all. Volunteers assisted students at UW Oshkosh-Fox Cities (8) and at Lawrence University (13), at events including the Downtown Appleton Farm Markets, Juneteenth, Kaukauna Fest and Latino Fest, and senior living facilities from Appleton to New London and Waupaca. That adds **36 voters** to the total.

And now, following the election, the League will continue to be a source for unbiased information, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Trust the League.

Events &
Housing
36

In Memorium



Michael J. Malaney passed away on October 12. He built his career as a pharmacist. Michael and wife Stephanie have been long and active members of the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities. A Celebration of Life for Michael will be held on November 16. Details may be found online at <https://www.postcrescent.com/obituaries/pwix0976169> We extend our deepest sympathies to Stephanie and to their family.

VOTER SERVICES: Partners Help Drive Voter Assistance

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

The LWV Appleton-Fox Cities has been busy the last two months helping those turning 18 by election day to register to vote. Here are some of those events.



Brian Post, Peyton (student), and social studies teacher Monica Jones helped Xavier High School seniors register to vote.

Brian Post and Monica Jones, a social studies teacher at Xavier, connected to assist those students who turned 18 to register to vote. Fourteen students were helped to register.

Brian Post also connected with Brian Kurtz, a Social Studies teacher at East High School. They coordinated training for students who were then able to help their classmates register.

Other locations:

- Linda Bjella met and trained Nora Lindsey-Reilly, a student at North High School. They registered 8 students.
- Linda Bjella also registered 3 students at West High School.
- J. Klimaszewski registered 6 students at Appleton Central High School.
- Pat Lund-Moe, Jeanne Roberts, and student Annabelle Mendoza registered 13 students at Hortonville High School.
- While not part of high school outreach, Brian Post and Jennifer McGuire registered 8 students at UWO-Fox Cities. And April Savage, assisted by a Lawrence University student, helped 13 LU students register.

Voter Services also connected with the Appleton Area School District to distribute "Birthday Cards." As students turn 18, Senior homeroom teachers will provide students with a card that has a QR code to MyVote.Wi.gov for voter registration.



Making Democracy Work Awards
will be presented at the League's
Holiday Brunch
Saturday, December 14

Featuring a Panel Presentation –
**Childcare Dilemma: Strengthening Families,
Building Community Support, Expanding a Workforce**
Add this date to your holiday calendar now!

HOLIDAY BRUNCH: Annual Gathering of Cheer, Support

By Jan Smith

Program Director

program@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

This year the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities (LWVAFC) will host its **Holiday Brunch** at Bubolz Nature Preserve on **December 14** from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. This will be a time to share some holiday cheer as well as to learn about an acute community issue: the current crisis facing families seeking childcare. An expansive brunch buffet will be included.

We will also honor recipients of the 2024 **Making Democracy Work Awards** for both adults and youths. The awards celebrate those who have envisioned a way to improve the Fox Cities community, and who have mobilized others to work with them to effect change benefiting the broader community and support voting.

Panel Presentation

The featured program is titled ***The Childcare Dilemma: Strengthening Families, Building Community Support and Expanding a Workforce... Is it Really Possible?***

Barb Tengesdal, Ph.D., Executive Director of First 5 Fox Valley and Julie Stoffel, Director of Engagement and Community Outreach for the Wisconsin Early Childcare Association (WECA), along with a parent representative will take attendees through a series of engaging role play scenarios and table discussion. We'll explore the current state of childcare and its critical impact on families, from economic challenges to access and quality of care. We'll learn the challenges facing parents today when seeking quality childcare in the Fox Valley.

Through this program, their goal will be to identify issues that affect a crumbling childcare infrastructure in Wisconsin, and responses needed from families, communities and policy makers.

To make our programs purposeful, each program concludes with a call to action.

Support Through Giving

This year, we would like to change the previously anticipated silent auction of gift baskets to an opportunity for members to support the needs of local childcare institutions by bringing needed items for distribution. A suggested list of recipients and their wish lists will be forthcoming. In the meantime, we have assembled wish lists shared by some of the organizations, along with a few hints from parents in the know., to start you thinking, if you choose to participate. [Watch for the Holiday Brunch invitation and complete details soon.](#)

Wish-Full Ideas to Get Us Started

Here are a few theme ideas to organize gift giving. Feel welcome to come up with your own gift ideas to suit families with **children from birth to age five**.

Check individual childcare centers' wish lists found on their websites. Shop online and your gifts will be delivered directly to the care center. Amazon is a source as well.

Wrap It in a Backpack: As one resource center observed, busy moms pack their families' daily needs in a backpack, leaving them hands-free for carrying a little one or navigating the day. School aged children and preschoolers also cart important stuff in backpacks between home and daycare, and those carryalls can get pretty tattered. Gather your gifts into a backpack designed for either parents or children.

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HOLIDAY BRUNCH: Gathering Support, cont.

Bath and To Bed: * gentle baby/child body wash; towels of all sizes, including hooded towels; bath toys; washcloths; bath safety items; dental care (not mint); hairbrushes. * Be aware of potential allergies, etc.

Nightie Night: New crib or twin-size sheets; pillows; blankets, buddy or taggie blankets; slippers; pajamas

Basics: underwear; socks; diapers and wipes; gas or grocery gift cards

Winter Wear: snow pants; boots; insulated mittens; warm socks

Comfort Care: a stuffed animal; books; blanket throws; puzzles; games, etc.

PROGRAM: Voice Your Priorities on Local Issues

By Jan Smith

Program Director

program@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

Lively Issues

Saturday, January 11, 2025

At Lively Issues we discuss the upcoming program year. We hear members' priorities on local issues to include in monthly programs and a possibility of a new local study. This year we will also discuss the status of our current local study on Public Safety. Due to the busy fall election season, this study is just getting started, which is likely going to necessitate making it a two-year study program.

Karen Pfefferle and April Savage have agreed to co-chair this study. Whether you have knowledge or experience with the topic, or just want to know more, your participation is welcome. Please direct your interest via email to program@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

MEMBERSHIP: Thankful for New, Ongoing Members

By Cindy Fallona

Membership Director

membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

The Thanksgiving turkey needs to be a bit larger this year as the LWV Appleton-Fox Cities continues to attract new members! The falling leaves of October brought three members: **Alyssa Vandenberg-Kaukauna**, **Gretchen Wuebben-Hortonville** and **Lydia Guell-Kimberly**. A sneak peak at November has already had **Beth Weiler-Appleton** join us.



The Appleton-Fox Cities League began 2024 with 117 members. Since February 1, our membership has increased to 143. A big shout out to our new members, and to existing members who provide a warm welcome and outstanding opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Joining and setting up your profile on the League website, or changing information in your profile, is easy. Go to lwvappletonfoxcities.org and click on Join or Renew to make changes or join. This website is also filled with information regarding League and events happening in the communities.

DEI: Bookshare Joins ‘Poverty, by America’ Study

By April Savage
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Director
dei@Lwvappletonfoxcities.org

The next **BookShare** will meet **Wednesday, November 20 at 1:00 p.m.** We will read (or in some cases, re-read) **Poverty, by America** by Matthew Desmond. Esther is also reading it, and it fits well with our recent program on the unhoused.

Upcoming Events

Ongoing—**History Museum at the Castle, Our Afghan Neighbors** <https://myhistorymuseum.org/exhibits/our-afghan-neighbors/>

Ongoing—**Multicultural Coalition Winter Gear Drive**
<https://ourmci.org/>

November 16-17—Fox Cities Hmong New Year Celebration, Fox Cities Expo Center
<https://www.facebook.com/events/fox-cities-exhibition-center/2024-fox-cities-hmong-new-year/2306154646388012/>

November 19—City of Appleton Comprehensive Plan Update Open House, Tuesday, November 19th from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Thedacare Regional Center Ironwood Conference Room, Western Entrance Door #38, 1818 N. Meade St., Appleton <https://www.appleton.org/home>

NEW North DEI Calendar <https://www.thenewnorth.com/diversity-inclusion/events/>

DEI CALENDAR- <https://www.diversityresources.com/november-diversity-calendar-2024/>

- **November** marks **National Native American Heritage Month** which honors the cultures, traditions, and histories of all Native people living in the United States. Movember, a month-long fundraiser, is observed each November too, and aims to raise awareness for men’s issues such as suicide and prostate and testicular cancer.

- **Transgender Awareness Week – November 13-19**

This observance raises visibility for the transgender community. Its goal is to address issues they face, and to advocate as an ally about education surrounding discrimination toward transgender individuals in society.

- **World Diabetes Day – November 14**

Nearly a century after the discovery of insulin, this world health day raises awareness of challenges that those living with diabetes face daily. Today, we focus on advocating for the need for access to diabetic care throughout the world.

- **International Day For Tolerance – November 16**

Established in 1996, this day promotes respect for the world’s cultures, languages, and religions. Today is a day to educate the general public about the need for universal human rights for all humans.

- **International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day – November 19**

Also known as Survivor Day, the event is sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, a program that unites survivors globally. Stand alongside survivors and their families as we come together to understand through shared experiences today.

- **Native Women’s Equal Pay Day – November 21**

Today, we learn that Native women must work nearly 23 months to earn the same salary as white, non-Hispanic men do in one year. This wage disparity is enlightening and deserves public awareness. Educating others about this discrepancy ensures that the pay gap fight continues worldwide every year.