



PO Box 1281 Appleton, WI 54912 • 920.738.7766  
[lwvappletonfoxcities.org](http://lwvappletonfoxcities.org) • [info@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:info@lwvappletonfoxcities.org)

FEBRUARY 2025

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: How Transformation Affects You

On February 1, 2025, LWVUS implemented significant changes to League membership and dues structure. This summarizes the changes for LWV Appleton-Fox Cities members and provides context for required bylaws changes that we will vote on at the May 22 Annual Meeting.



By Linda Bjella  
[president@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:president@lwvappletonfoxcities.org)

The transition should be seamless for members. Most of you renewed your membership prior to January 31 in the usual way which means your dues have been paid for a year. When your membership comes due a year from that date, you will renew using the new system. If you did not renew your membership prior to January 31 and choose to renew, you will do so using the new system.

If you haven't already, members should soon receive an email from "Transformation" LWV US inviting you to update your membership profile. You will enter your current email\* and will receive a message to that email address with a six-digit numerical code to confirm your identity. (LWV US has wisely opted to use this two-factor authentication which does not require members to have an additional password to log into the system.) From there you can confirm your address, phone number, and other optional demographic information.

\*Each member is required to have a unique email in order to access the LWV US portal. If your household has previously used one email for two or more people, going forward, each person will need to create a separate email account with LWV US.

### Why LWVUS Is Making Changes

These changes are part of the Structure Transformation Plan adopted in 2022, which is rooted in the League's Transformation Journey that began after the 2016 national convention.

In the current phase of the Plan, the League is Framing Our Future, building power by building out the framework that will carry us forward for the next hundred years.

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## ACTION: Civility, Common Ground Mark Town Hall

By Janice Quinlan  
Action Vice President  
[action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

Senator Kristin Dassler-Alfheim, Representative Dean Kaufert, Representative Lori Palmeri, and Representative Ron Tusler participated in our February 3 Legislative Town Hall. These elected representatives responded to a host of questions facing Wisconsin as it develops its 2025-2027 budget. These included housing, BadgerCare expansion, education funding, containment of PFAS, and much more.

It was a smoothly run, issues-oriented event with civility and common ground, marking five years of bipartisan representation. Representatives Lee Snodgrass and Dave Murphy had originally agreed to join us but were unable due to a funeral and illness.

For those of you not able to join us that evening, the full length video recording is available at [LWV Town Hall Feb 3, 2025](#), on our YouTube channel and the front page of our website.

Thanks to those League members who made this happen: Linda Bjella and Jan Quinlan, for contacting legislators, selecting questions, and producing the slide show; Jan Smith for monitoring and selecting audience questions during the event; Barb Kelly and Mike Goodnight for behind the scenes technical support and recording, and Kathy Voigt for outreach and media relations.

Our thanks also go out to the League of Women Voters of Winnebago County for their co-sponsorship.

We are planning our next Legislative Town Hall for fall 2025, so stay tuned.

## TAKE ACTION: Consensus Takes National, Local Tracks

By Janice Quinlan  
Action Vice President  
[action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:action@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

Our March 10, 2025 Consensus Meeting will be a doubleheader! We will discuss and come to consensus on two separate studies, one local and one national.

**LWV Consensus Double Header**  
**Monday March 10, 2025**  
**6:30-8:30pm**  
**Van Zeeland Nursery Meeting Room**  
**2600 Casaloma Drive, Appleton 54913**

Our Local Study is in Phase II, following last year's study of our Local Support Positions. In May 2024 we approved a new preamble and a grid of recommended changes to each section of the support positions. This year a task force of Jan Quinlan, Nancy Jones, and April Savage has been working on the specific updates. These updates will convert our Support Positions from an outline format into narratives more in line with LWVWI and LWVUS. At our March 10 meeting, we will review these changes, and discuss this consensus question: *Do we accept the proposed updates for our LWV-Appleton Fox Cities local support positions?*

LWVUS is studying the Federal Judiciary, including the Supreme Court of the United States. Discussion will include ethics, SCOTUS structural reform, financial disclosures, recusal, transparency, independence, and representation. Study materials and consensus questions will be emailed to all active League members separately. Such a timely issue is on an accelerated timeline for the LWVUS since it is of great importance in our current political environment.

Look for background resources on both of these consensus issues via email soon. Join us for a lively two-level discussion!

## VOTER SERVICES: Candidate Forums Scheduled

The League has scheduled or is in the planning stages for Candidate Forums for local positions, and there is potential for more as contested races are reported.

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

### Candidate Forums/Interviews – Spring 2025

**Grand Chute Town Board Supervisors/Town Chair:**

**Tuesday, February 25 from 6:30-8:00**

**Grand Chute Town Center Park Community Building, 1850 Grand Chute Blvd, Appleton, WI**

All five candidates have been invited to participate. Candidates and the positions for which they are running include:

- Jason J. Van Eperen, Town Chair
- Beth English, Town Chair
- Mark S. Heling, Board Supervisor Seat No. 1
- Anthony Lehrer, Board Supervisor Seat No. 2
- Walt Nocito, Board Supervisor Seat No. 2

The League is also planning a forum for the **Appleton Area School District** candidates on **Thursday, March 6**. Watch for details as they are finalized. Please email questions for any of the candidates to: [voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org) **Please be sure to identify the particular race for which the question is intended.**

If there is a contested race in your school district or city/town government that you feel would benefit from a forum, please contact [voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvappletonfoxcities.org).

## MEMBERSHIP: Renewals Are *Red Hot!*

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

We are in the grip of winter but the membership of LWV Appleton-Fox Cities is *red hot!* Please welcome two new members — **Amanda Skorr** and **Jean James**, both from Appleton.

Our membership renewal process was a smashing success. This cycle we had the largest number of members renew in many years. Thank you to all who value the mission of the League. We'll share updated numbers as we confirm new members and finalize our counts.

### In Memoriam

Judith Winzenc of Appleton passed away on February 2 after a sudden illness.

In 1972, Judy accepted a position at Appleton East High School teaching English and she remained at East until her retirement in 1998. During the 1960's she was an active member and an officer of the League of Women Voters of Appleton. In 1970, she was elected alderperson of the then 12th Ward in the City of Appleton, served two terms until 1974, and was city council president in 1973.



A celebration of life for Judy will be held on Saturday, February 22, from 12-3 p.m. at Meade Street Bistro, 2729 N. Meade Street, Appleton. A complete obituary may be found [HERE](#).

We extend our sincere sympathies to Judy's family and friends.

## DEI: Book Share Turns Page to Welcome More Attendees

By April Savage

DEI Director

[dei@lwwappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:dei@lwwappletonfoxcities.org)

The DEI book share is growing! To accommodate all who are interested, we will alternate meeting times and locations each month. All are welcome to join in — you do not need to be familiar with the material or a member of the League. Here are the details for this month:

**When: Wednesday February 19th, 6:00-8:00 p.m.**

**What:** White Christian Privilege — The Illusion of Religious Equality in America by Khyati Joshi, OR Redeeming Justice: From Defendant to Defender, My Fight for Equity on Both sSdes of a Broken System by Jarrett Adams

**Where:** Mondo! On the River, 425 W. Water St, Appleton

**Who:** You, anyone interested in genuinely exploring issues of equity, inclusion, assimilation and diversity without partisan rhetoric

**Why:** To strengthen community, stretch your thinking, watch the river flow, and support local "cash bar"

**P.S.** If you can't make it this month, the March Book Share will be a weekday afternoon at Copper Rock Coffee, 210 W. College Ave., Appleton. Stay tuned for more details.

## DEI: Calendar of Community Activities League has

February is dedicated to celebrating Black History Month, a time to honor the contributions, achievements, and rich history of Black Americans. This month also includes significant events that promote harmony and awareness across various cultural and health-related spectrums. This list recognizes events beginning with the start of the month.

February 1 – UN: World Interfaith Harmony Week

Promotes harmony between all people regardless of their faith.

February 2 – Pagan and Wiccan: Imbolc

Celebrates the beginning of spring and the goddess Brigid.

February 4 – World Cancer Day

Raises awareness of cancer prevention, detection, and treatment.

Saturday, February 15, noon-4 p.m. 3rd Annual Black History & Afro Hair Fair, hosted by People of Progression, 1825 N. Bluemound Dr, Appleton

Saturday February 15, 2 - 7 p.m. [NorthEast WI Annual Chinese New Year Celebration & Bazaar](#), Becket's, 2 Jackson St., Oshkosh

February 17 – Washington's Birthday (Presidents' Day)

Honors the birthday of George Washington, the first U.S. President.

Tuesday, February 18 – VOTE (Primary Election)

February 23- March 7, [Black Feminist Fortnight 2025](#) (various events) hosted by Lawrence University

February 26 – Hindu: Maha Shivaratri

A major Hindu festival celebrating Lord Shiva.

Tuesday, April 1: VOTE (General Election)

## LWV US: Pledge to Protect, Preserve Democracy

The following letter and documents were sent out by LWV US President Dianna Winn three days prior to the presidential inauguration.

Dear League members,

On January 20, Inauguration Day, the next president and vice president of the United States will be sworn into office in front of the US Capitol Building. As part of the peaceful transfer of power, the two men will recite their oaths of office, swearing to protect and defend the US Constitution and to faithfully enact their duties.

As we anticipate unprecedented challenges to our democracy, there could be no better time to pledge our own oath to protect and preserve democracy. It's important to have our priorities in place for these first 100 days to help us maintain a focus on our mission to empower voters and defend democracy.

Your state and local Leagues' approach may look different, because the fight to defend our democracy will vary depending on state legislatures and local politics.

I encourage us all to focus on solutions rather than problems, where we can. As the next administration begins, we remain steadfast in our commitment to democracy, to the American people, and to one another.

In League,  
Dianna Wynn, President

### LWV Oath to Democracy

“We do solemnly swear that we will empower voters and defend our democracy. That we will faithfully execute our civic responsibility as nonpartisan advocates.

We do this fearlessly, reflectively, and collectively.  
We act from a place of hope and collective power.

We affirm that we will work to provide democracy education and election administration support, restore and defend voting rights protections, abolish the Electoral College, protect democracy organizations, and fight for reproductive freedoms.  
We will not be deterred from these tasks.

So join us to protect life, liberty, freedom, and justice.” — LWV US

**First 100 DAYS: LWV US Offers Political Strategy**  
 National staff has developed a national political strategy campaign to keep our organizational focus during what we expect to be a turbulent and distraction-heavy first 100 days of the new administration.

This set of priorities will help us avoid mission creep and focus our efforts on the areas where we can have the greatest impact. LWV recommends state and local Leagues go through their own exercise of gold/silver/bronze prioritization or other strategic planning so Leagues can have the greatest impact. — LWV US

<b>GOLD: LWV Leadership</b>	<b>SILVER: Partnership</b>	<b>BRONZE: Awareness</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Democracy Education &amp; Election Administration Support</li> <li>•Restore and Defend Voting Rights Protections</li> <li>•Abolish Electoral College</li> <li>•Protecting Democracy Organizations &amp; Institutions</li> <li>•Reproductive Freedoms (National Abortion Ban)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Immigration</li> <li>•ERA</li> <li>•Defend against Attacks on DEI &amp; the LGBTQIA+ community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Government shutdowns</li> <li>•Closing the Department of Education</li> <li>•Broader immigration policy proposals beyond core League focus</li> <li>•Climate change</li> <li>•Gun safety</li> <li>•Healthcare/dismantle Obamacare (outside of reproductive rights)</li> </ul>

**TRANSFORMATION: Strategy Affects Members, cont.**

- Building League power at every level is necessary to fulfill our mission of Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy.
- Vital work happening at the state and local levels could benefit from increased support.
- Changing the pay requirement will open Leagues to a more diverse, expansive membership by removing barriers to membership.
- Too much time and talent are spent on duplicative administrative efforts.

**Current Membership and Dues Payment Structure**

1. League members join the local League of their choice, and each local League has its own mechanism for joining and renewing.
2. Every local League sets its own dues amounts.
3. Every local League sends Per-Member-Payments (PMP) to the national and state Leagues.
4. LWVUS does not require PMP for Life Members or Student members.
5. The required PMP payment to LWVUS for additional members in a household is one-half that of the PMP required for the first member.

**Changes to Membership Categories and Dues Mechanisms**

1. Members will join and renew through one national platform, with a link available at any League website. Members will be able to select the League they join,

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## TRANSFORMATION: Strategy Affects Members, cont.

- as they do now. ChapterSpot is the name of the membership platform. A QR code will facilitate easy joining access at community events.
2. There will be a mechanism for automatic renewals.
  3. Membership types will include:
    - Members
    - Life Members
  4. The student membership type will be discontinued.
  5. Household memberships will be discontinued. (That is, the payment category “Additional Member in Household” will be discontinued.)

### Changes to Dues Amounts

1. Individuals will be encouraged to pay a standard rate of \$75.
2. There will be optional higher join tiers of \$150, \$250, \$500; members in all tiers are equal in rights, responsibilities, and standing, regardless of the amount dues paid.
3. There will be a pay-what-you-can option where members can choose their own dues amount, with a minimum of \$20.
4. Although the payment category for an Additional Member in Household will be discontinued, a member joining from the same household as an existing member can choose to pay half of the recommended amount under the pay-what-you-can model.
5. There will likely be a method for members to join at an amount below the \$20 floor, at the option of the local League, which would be responsible for the \$20 minimum dues and would define eligibility parameters. This means LWV Appleton-Fox Cities will probably choose to continue offering free or lower cost student memberships and payment support.

### Changes to the Dues Split and Flow of Dues

1. Local Leagues will no longer make Per-Member-Payments (PMP) to the national and state Leagues. Instead, the national League will send local and state Leagues their portion of each dues payment shortly after it is made. This will be handled electronically through the Stripe payment platform.
  2. With the new dues split, LWVUS will receive a smaller percentage of dues and both state and local Leagues will receive larger percentages:
    - 20% to local Leagues
    - 47% to state Leagues
    - 33% to the national League
- For comparison, these percentages reflect the current dues split:
- 51% to LWV US
  - 37% to LWV WI
  - 12% to LWV-AFC
3. The new dues split will also apply to dues payments for the higher join tiers.
  4. State and local Leagues will be responsible for credit card fees at the same rate as the dues split. If you pay by credit card, you will see three different amounts on your statement. Dues paid to LWV Appleton-Fox Cities and LWV of Wisconsin are tax-deductible. LWV US dues are NOT tax deductible.

### What Will Stay the Same

1. Membership renewal dates will continue to be the same from year to year.
2. People will still be able to join and renew from a link at the local website.

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## TRANSFORMATION: Strategy Affects Members, cont.

3. People will still be able to join with a check (although online renewal will be encouraged).
4. Additional members in a household can choose to pay half of the recommended amount under the pay-what-you-can model.
5. Local members will continue to be members at all three League levels: LWV Appleton-Fox Cities, LWV of Wisconsin, and LWV of the United States

### How the Changes Will Help LWV Build Power

1. Joining with a link that will be available on any League website simplifies joining, reducing the frustration of searching for a local League or visiting the national site and then having difficulty finding a local League. LWVUS can also more effectively encourage membership through social media, and a QR code will make it easier or people to join at community events.
2. By removing barriers to participation, the pay-what-you-can model will encourage more members and a more diverse membership. LWVUS expects the higher join tiers to finance the pay-what-you-can model.
3. The new dues split allocates a larger percentage of dues to state Leagues. This is intended to build their capacity to exercise political power within their legislature, support professional paid staff, build organizing strength, and support local Leagues to simplify our federated structure.
4. Our local League will retain a larger percentage of dues to finance local work.
5. Membership renewals will be on a rolling basis according to the individual join or renew date. There will also be an option for automatic renewal that can be reversed at any point in the future.
6. LWVUS expects the new membership system to reduce administrative work for roster managers, membership chairs, and treasurers.

### Local Impact and Questions

1. LWVUS predicts 3/4 of local Leagues will come out financially ahead from the start, and LWVUS will make up any shortfall in membership dues collected for two years.
2. Thanks to the generosity of our sustaining members who join at the \$150 level currently, our League is able to retain half, so that \$75 becomes a direct contribution to our local League. Because so many local Leagues have relied on this type of dues supplement to the join process, LWV US has built in a mechanism to continue this benefit. When you renew your membership in the future, the dues level you choose to pay will be split according to the new percentages: 33% to LWV US, 47% to LWV WI and 20% to LWV Appleton-Fox Cities. On the NEXT page of the join process, there will be an option to make an additional donation, 100% of which will go directly to our local League.

LWV Appleton-Fox Cities appreciates the good intentions upon which the new membership structure is based and supports the work of our national League as it works to implement these changes to drive us forward. Questions? Please send an email to [president@lwvappletonfoxcities.org](mailto:president@lwvappletonfoxcities.org).

## Leading the Work of LWV of Appleton-Fox Cities

**Leading the work of our local League is a Board of dedicated volunteers who bring experience and insight to the mission. You can find their contact information [HERE](#).**

**Officers:** President Linda Bjella; Action Vice President Jan Quinlan; Voter Services Vice President Jacqui Klimaszewski; Secretary Deb Otteson; Treasurer Patti Clark-Strojke

**Directors:** Cindy Fallona, Membership; Jan Smith, Program ; Kathy Voigt, Communications/Technology; April Savage, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)