



APRIL 2025

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Taking a Stand for Democracy
On Tuesday, March 25, our League jointly sponsored a press conference with the Winnebago County League to issue a call to action to Congress.



president@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

On Tuesday, March 25, our League jointly sponsored a press conference with the Winnebago County League to issue a call to action to Congress. Inspired by the February 14 LWV US letter to Congressional leaders, we wanted to take a public stand locally to show how seriously we believe our democracy is threatened.

Over the course of several Zoom sessions, we pulled this together in less than a week. We wrote our speeches and a joint letter to our Senators and Congressmen. We had postcards printed with the League's "Oath to Democracy" to hand out to attendees so they could write to their representatives. We organized and rehearsed our presentations and networked with other local nonprofits. We invited the media to the Menasha Public Library at 10:00 a.m. and held our breath.

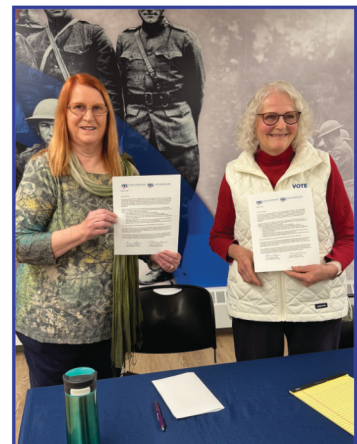
By the time the event started, we had set up three additional rows of chairs. Margy Davey, President of the Winnebago League, and I delivered our remarks to frequent spontaneous applause. And then we signed a joint letter to Senators Baldwin and Johnson, and Representatives Wied and Grothman from our two Leagues. All 200 postcards were taken by attendees.

We sent a loud and clear message to our representatives!

I don't recall our League ever taking such a bold, public stand, but we live in unprecedented times. It was what this present moment called for, and it felt good to take a stand for democracy.

Our remarks follow on the next page.

— Linda



(More on page 2)

MESSAGE TO CONGRESS: Protect the Rule of Law

Good morning. My name is Linda Bjella and I am President of the League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities. Our League, together with the League of Women Voters of Winnebago County, have convened this news conference to issue a call to action to Fox Valley residents to contact their elected representatives in Congress. We are joined this morning by members of several other local nonpartisan organizations such as (AAUW, Esther Fox Valley, NOW, The Women's Action Coalition, and Fox Cities Advocates for Public Education...) This demonstrates the deep concern of hundreds of Fox Valley citizens over what we see as a crisis for our democracy.

On February 14, the 105th anniversary of the League's founding, the League of Women Voters of the United States, together with League presidents representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, took the very unusual step of sending an urgent letter to all Congressional leaders. Writing on behalf of over a million League members, the letter demanded that Congress exercise its Article 1 Constitutional authority to "protect the rule of law, defend the Constitution, and end the overreach by the executive branch of the government."

Article I of the Constitution invests great power in the Congress, the branch of the government closest to the people. Congress is granted the power to create our laws, the power of the purse, and oversight over the other branches. Federal government agencies created by the Congress cannot be dismantled without the consent of Congress. Money appropriated by Congress cannot be unilaterally paused or impounded by the Executive. We demand that our Congressional representatives — Democrats, Republicans, and Independents — honor their oaths and protect us, their constituents, from this breathtaking power grab by the Executive branch of the government.

Hello. I am Margy Davey, and I am President of the Winnebago County League of Women Voters.

In its letter, the US League cited the following executive actions:

-an attempt to end birthright citizenship in the United States in violation of the 14th Amendment

-the firing of 17 inspectors general without giving Congress the 30-day notice required by federal law

-an ongoing attempt to dismantle federal agencies such as USAID, the Consumer Protection Bureau, and the Department of Education, which require notice to and input of Congress prior to such actions

-allowing private citizens who have neither been elected nor subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, to access the private sensitive data of the American people

-an attempt to reduce the federal workforce indiscriminately without providing employees the due process to which they are entitled

While Congress, the Executive Branch, and the Courts each have equal and balanced powers within our constitutional system, it is us, the American people, who have the ultimate authority to protect our democracy. We must fight for it, and demand that our Congressional representatives uphold the rule of law and protect our Constitutional Republic.



PROGRAMS: Combine Learning with Friendship

By Jan Mirenda Smith

Program Director

program@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

Programming provides an opportunity for LWVAF members to meet one another face to face, and is an integral part of education. March offered an important in-person **consensus** discussion of local support positions led by Jan Quinlan, Action Vice President, an opportunity to discuss the Federal Judiciary, and a review of the LWVUS consensus questions led by President Linda Bjella. Member voices were heard with mostly strong support of the consensus questions.

April 14 will offer an inside look at **local education funding**, particularly for special education. "The Time is Now: Fund Public Schools in the Fox Cities" is a 25- minute slide presentation created by Fox Cities Advocates for Public Education, which will be presented by Jim Bowman and Patti Clark-Stojke, that describes the educational opportunity available to children in the Fox Cities and how public schools help them achieve success. "The Time is Now" also explains, however, that schools in the Fox Cities are undermined by inadequate funding in operations, special education and mental health.

Bowman coordinates Fox Cities Advocates for Public Education. The non-partisan, issue-oriented advocacy group focuses on Wisconsin's promise of a quality public education for every child. He served for 10 years on the school board of the Appleton Area School District.

Patti Clark-Stojke is an experienced Appleton Area School District Special Education teacher with a specialty in Speech Pathology. The two will be joined by Holly Burr, the district executive director of Finance following the AASD Board meeting, if time permits. The program takes place at Einstein Middle School Auditorium in Appleton from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Registration is requested but not necessary.

In closing the year, mark your calendars and register on line for the May 22 **Annual Meeting** from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Girl Scouts of the Northern Great Lakes Region offices, Appleton. The opportunity to mingle with your friends and wrap up the exciting year awaits. Registration is \$30 for the meeting. This year LWVAF has added an **After Glow** Party at Holidays Pub and Grill on N. Richmond St. Unwind with your friends in League. We look forward to you joining us. Feel free to **bring a friend or two**.

SAVE THE DATES: It's Time for Annual Meetings^{League}

Mark your calendars for our **League's Annual Meeting** on **Thursday, May 22** from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at the Girl Scouts building, 4693 N. Lynndale Dr., Appleton. After some social time over soft drinks, we will enjoy a delicious buffet dinner catered by Michiel's. Our business meeting will follow when we will approve a new budget, bylaws changes, a slate of officers for our board, and a consensus of a comprehensive review of our existing local positions.

This is always a joyful time when we celebrate our League's accomplishments and each other as dedicated advocates for democracy.

We have also reserved a room until around 10:00 p.m. for a post-meeting gathering for drinks and light hors d'œuvres at The Holidays Pub and Grill at 3950 N. Richmond St. Registration is now open on our website [here](#).

And don't forget the **LWV WI Annual Meeting** on **June 6-7 in Menomonee Falls**, hosted by the Ozaukee and Washington County LWV. The theme is "The Arts and Civic Activism". Register [here](#) to attend in-person or virtually.

DEI BOOK SHARE: To Read or Not to Read; Just Come!

By Kathie Kinnaman
DEI Book Share Group
dei@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

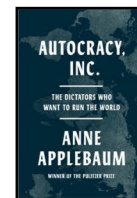
What are DEI Book Share participants saying?

"Not only are the books we read wide-ranging and topical, but the conversation around each book is thoughtful, spirited and honest. I always come away from our conversations with a deeper understanding of issues I may know very little about and a deeper commitment to accept 'the other'."
— Hélène Pohl

Note that the quality of conversation is mentioned. Once we get talking, be it about DEI, prison reform, or redistricting, it doesn't even matter if you've read the book! Either way, it will feel like a therapy session.

So please join us next time. We will meet:
Wednesday, April 30
6 p.m. at Mondo's on the River
Or join us just for a glass of wine at 7 p.m.!

We will be reading and discussing *Autocracy, Inc.* by Anne Applebaum.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Community Events of Note

Thursday, April 10, 5:00 p.m.; **CASA Voices of Change** (advocacy for children impacted by abuse and neglect) at Poplar Hall, Appleton <https://casafo.org/voices/?amp=1>

Saturday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.; **Katha Dance Theater: Prakritir Pratisodh- Nature's Revenge!** at the PAC; https://foxcitiespac.com/event/katha-dance-theatre-prakritir-pratisodh-natures-revenge/?fbclid=IwY2xjawJdKQZleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHnUi37ke5tLTA3X5aw8_gYUcaAEg_A8z90A6ADKAKZ1SGV-xNyirrpFB5o5_aem_JRHHCLTlilpHMjScYu4iKw

April 9 - **International Day of Pink** – This day stands against bullying, homophobia, transphobia, and all forms of discrimination, with communities worldwide encouraged to wear pink in solidarity. It's a call for inclusivity and respect, fostering awareness and support for a safer, more accepting world.

April 14 – Sikh, Hindu: **Vaisakhi** Marks the Sikh New Year and celebrates the spring harvest.

April 22 - **Earth Day**: Earth Day raises global awareness about environmental protection, inspiring action to combat climate change, reduce pollution, and promote sustainability. It's a reminder of our shared responsibility to protect the planet for future generations through conscious, everyday choices.

April 24 - **Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day**: This day commemorates the lives lost during the Armenian Genocide, honoring the heritage and resilience of Armenian communities worldwide. It serves as a call for reflection, understanding, and recognition of historical injustices to prevent future atrocities.

Set Your Calendar for the fun Summer Picnic!

Thursday, June 12 • 5-8 p.m.

1000 Islands Nature Center, Kaukauna • Bring a friend!

MEMBERSHIP: Exploding With Energy

By Cindy Fallona
Membership Director
membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org

The months of February and March saw an explosion of new League members. Our mission of **Empowering Voters/Defending Democracy** is resonating with Appleton-Fox Cities residents!

Welcome to the following new members —

Darlene Patrick - Oshkosh
Augie Euhardy - Hortonville
Ellen Weiland - Appleton
Geremaine Millard - Appleton
Ute Kegel - Kaukauna

Susan O'Neill - Appleton
Shannon Featherstone - Appleton
Karin Meier - Appleton
Margaret DeWane - Appleton
Stephanie Vrabec – Menasha

Are your friends taking interest in your connection to the League? Are they, too, looking for ways to engage and learn in a meaningful way? Invite them to join you at a League activity — like the April 14 program on funding public education. Everyone is welcome.

Or refer them to lwvappletonfoxcities.org. You may also send their contact information to Cindy Fallona, Membership Director, by emailing to membership@lwvappletonfoxcities.org.

Need to change your address, email or phone number? Simply go to lwvappletonfoxcities.org to update your profile.

DEMOCRACY COMES AT A PRICE

**You are the investor who holds democracy in your hands.
The League of Women Voters is where your investment makes an impact.**

Please consider a gift during the 2025 Spring Fund Appeal to stand with the League
to Empower Voters & Defend Democracy

In 2024-25
more than 450
individuals
assisted to
register to vote or
update their
registration

150
members
strong

A Trusted
NONPARTISAN
Voice
for 103 Years!

Where all
voices can
be heard



DONATE NOW

920.738.7766 ●

www.lwvappletonfoxcities.org ●

PO Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912 ●

LWVAFC is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)3 of the tax code. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

LEAGUE, COLLABORATORS: Taking Action



League members were among several women's organizations on hand March 20 as Appleton Mayor Jake Woodford issued a special proclamation in recognition of Women's History Month.



League Consensus Meeting | March 10, 2025



League Letter to Congress News Conference | March 25, 2025



My wife and I heard on the local news last night about LWV standing up for Democracy. I have sent several messages to Tony Weid and Ron Johnson. . . I want to thank your organization for speaking out to protect our government.

— Paul

Way to go League of Women Voters. You ROCK!
— Su



Thank you for standing up for our democracy
— Christy

Really grateful for the concerted effort by local organizations to stand for democracy and the opportunity to sit amongst them today. Words cannot express gratitude enough for this dose of rationality and call for respect for and adherence to our great U.S. Constitution!! Following our Nation's laws is not partisan. It is American.
— Amy

Thank you for taking a stand. It's disappointing to read the congressman's response deflecting from the concern.
— Jackie



"HANDS OFF!" Rally | April 5, 2025

