

The *informed* Voter



League of Women Voters of Appleton, Wisconsin

"Serving the citizens of the Appleton Area & Outagamie County"

May 22, 2012

Calendar of Events

June

- June 1-2 LWV Wisconsin Annual Meeting. Wausau.
- June 9 Appleton Flag Day Parade, downtown Appleton. 2:00-4:00 pm.
- June 8-12 LWVUS 50th National Convention. Washington D.C.
- **There will be no Informed Voter issue in June!**

August

- August, 22, 4:30 pm-6:00 pm. Women's Equality Day Celebration. The History Museum, 330 E College Ave. Appleton.



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June Event

**Join us for the LWV-Wisconsin Annual Meeting
June 1-2 in Wausau.**

Speakers include Michigan Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly, speaking about Judicial Independence, and Margaret Holt, PhD, on "Naming and Framing Public Policy Issues to Foster Civil Discussion."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!!

LWV Appleton Annual Meeting—*The Recommended Local Study* to update the league's library position was passed. We will be looking for a committee to get started on this. Let anyone on the board know if you are interested in serving on the committee. It will be exciting to study the ideas for the future of libraries ...what will they look like in light of technology, needs of the community, etc.

*The non-recommended study, **Women's Health*** was passionately discussed. It was not accepted as a study, but the message was loud and clear, to provide informational meetings on the subject, to gather a body of knowledge on the subject, to find experts on the topic, and perhaps to consider it for a future study. The great interest in women's health as a study points up the importance of the "Lively Issues" meeting in January where the issues for the local study are discussed and determined.

State Annual Meeting—Sara Companik, Irene Strohbeen and I will attend the State Annual Meeting June 1-2 in Wausau.

National Convention—Sara Companik and I will head to Washington DC June 9th to attend the convention. (June 9-12). We are extending our stay to see some of the sights. This, of course, will be on our own dollar. I have never been to Washington DC and Sara kindly agreed to stay a few extra days to help me fulfill a long-time wish to see our nation's capital.

Board of Directors 2012-2013—You have nominated and elected a terrific group of women to serve on the board for the coming year. We will be meeting in June/July to work on the calendar of events.

Women's Equality Day—August 22, 4:30pm-6pm, at the History Museum. Curator Nick Hoffman will present a program on Women's Suffrage in Appleton. Limited seating so we will be requesting reservations. MARK YOUR CALENDARS. Invitation to come.

Enjoy your summer,
Shirley Strange
June 2012

LWV Appleton's 3rd ANNUAL WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATION WEDNESDAY AUGUST 22, 2012

*****Join us 4:30 - 6:00 PM*****

Reservations Required

league.appleton@yahoo.com

Limited Seating

5:30 Speaker, Nick Hoffman, Curator for The History Museum

More Information on Women's Equality Day

<http://nwHP.org/resourcecenter/equalityday.php>

INTRODUCING THE NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2012

President, Shirley Strange
Vice President Program, Sara Companik
Vice President Action, Irene Strohbeen
Treasurer, Barbara Kelly
Secretary, Miriam Douglass
Director - Stephanie Malaney, Membership
Director - Stevie Schmidt, Observer Corps
Director - Penny Robinson, Legislative Director
Director - Lee Snodgrass, Voter Service
Director - Carolyn Mewhorter, Transportation Study Chair
Director - Barb Dorzweiler, newsletter & website

Kudos...

Common Cause in Wisconsin Reform Update - May 1, 2012

Wisconsin, long one of the top two or three states in the nation in the percentage of eligible voters who participated in elections, was saddled last year with the most extreme and restrictive voter identification law in the nation. It is more extreme than voter identification laws in Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina (which also passed its new law last year), and other states of the Old Confederacy who have long histories of denying many of their citizens the ability to vote.

Why did Republicans ram through this measure and why did Walker sign it?
Because they could.

But now, they are paying the price for trying to deny thousands of Wisconsinites their most basic and sacred act of citizenship -- the right to cast a ballot. The Wisconsin law has been enjoined on constitutional grounds by two Wisconsin judges and it will not be in effect for either the May 8th recall primary election or the recall general election on June 5th. For this very positive development, Wisconsin can thank the heroic leadership and efforts of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin and others for defending democracy.

<http://www.commoncausewisconsin.org/>

Here are the Numbers: Percentages of Citizens without Photo IDs in Milwaukee County

When the Voter ID law was enacted in 2011, a civil suit was brought forward by the ACLU to challenge the impact of the law on certain demographic groups (*Frank vs. Walker*, Civil Action no. 2:11-cv-01128(LA)). A survey-based research study was commissioned by the ACLU to determine the percentage of voters who have acceptable photo IDs in Milwaukee County. Specifically, the study was seeking to answer if a disproportionate amount of Hispanic and African-American voters would have problems providing a photo ID in order to vote.

Here is a summary of the key findings:

1. 9.5% of eligible voters do not possess an acceptable photo ID; this is estimated to be 63,085 voters in Milwaukee County.
2. 13.8% of eligible voters do not possess the required documents to apply for a photo ID or driver's license; this equates to 91,615 eligible voters who would not be able to get a photo ID.
3. Broken down by race, % of eligible voters who lack photo ID are as follows:
 - a. White voters: 7% do not have photo ID
 - b. Black voters: 13% do not have photo ID
 - c. Hispanic voters: 15% do not have photo ID
4. Other demographic groups that are also disproportionately affected include:
 - a. Education, high school diploma or less: 17% lack photo ID (vs. 2% for college grads)
 - b. Low income, <\$20,000/yr: 19.2% lack photo ID (vs. 9.9% for \$20,000-\$40,000 or 2% for those >\$80,000)
 - c. Young age groups: 11% of 18-34 year olds (compared to 7% of 35-74 year olds)
 - d. Senior age groups: 17.4% of over 74 years old

The report goes further to mention that many more Latino and African-American voters are born outside of the state of Wisconsin than White voters, so it will be more difficult and costly for them to obtain birth certificates: 51.1% of Blacks and 28.3% of Hispanics were born in Wisconsin, compared to 81.1% of Whites.

Results are based on a survey of 1,973 residents of Milwaukee County who are eligible to vote in 2012. Total estimated number of eligible voters is 661,958 voters in Milwaukee County.

Thanks to Sara Campanik for bringing the research study report to our attention. To read the full report, follow this link: www.aclu.org/files/assets/062-10-exhibitjexpertreport.pdf



OBSERVER CORPS MEETINGS FOR JUNE

AASD meets at 7 p.m.

June 4th and June 18th at the Scullen Leadership Center

City Council meets at 7 p.m.

June 6th and June 20th

Outagamie County Board meets at 6:30 p.m.

June 12th and June 26th



League Informs Future Citizens

During the month of May, League President Shirley Strange and Voter Service Chair Irene Strohbeen had the opportunity to speak to future voters at two FVTC classes on Citizenship in Oshkosh and Appleton. The instructor, Karlyn Ehrhardt, wanted the students to learn about the League, about voting rights and why it's important, and possibilities for community involvement. The students originated from numerous countries including Myanmar, Peru, Russia, Pakistan, Taiwan and Mexico and they were all looking forward to becoming citizens.

It was a pleasure informing these future voters about why the right to vote is so important, and what others have had to do to gain that right. We found a few potential future LWV members in these classrooms too.

We will continue to take advantage of opportunities to spread the word to the community about the League and its work.

Regional Transit Authority Report by Carolyn Mewhorter

Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

Local Study 2010-2012

After a two year study, The League of Women Voters-Appleton has adopted a position supporting a Regional Transit Authority (RTA). The Annual Report, distributed at the meeting, contains the final report on the RTA study.

Our concern for the future funding of our transit system will continue. Hopefully, a Regional Transit Authority will be made possible thus assuring the continuation of the excellent services we have in the Fox Valley. In the meantime, work is being done at all levels of government to carefully study and finally recommend solutions to the many problems that exist in transportation.

Recently, the State Legislature established the Transportation Finance and Policy Commission as part of the 2011-2013 budget to examine issues related to the future of transportation finance in Wisconsin. The Commission has 10 voting members. WisDOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb is a non-voting member and serves as chair. Four public listening sessions were planned for the State with one being held in Appleton on April 26, 2012. It was well attended with a number of people speaking on behalf of transit and in support of the work being done by Valley Transit. The Commission members were attentive, respectful and appeared to be very interested in what people said. It was an encouraging exchange. The Commission's report to the Legislature is due no later than March 1, 2013 and will encompass new approaches for the next decade. Transit is included as a part of an overall study of transportation in Wisconsin.

To learn more about the Transportation Finance and Policy Commission please go to www.dot.wisconsin.gov/tfp/index.htm.

Carolyn Mewhorter

Election Days 2012

2012 will be a very busy year for elections and politics. Here are the upcoming elections dates, all Tuesdays:

June 5	Recall election
August 14	Fall election primary
November 6	Fall election

Did you know that you can request an absentee ballot for all remaining elections in 2012 by just submitting 1 Absentee Ballot Application form?

Appleton League of Women Voters Program 2012-2013

At the Lively Issues meeting in January by discussion and vote, the group recommended a new study and a non-recommended study to be presented to members at the Annual meeting in May. The Bylaws also allow voting members to make recommendations not proposed by the board submitted at least two months before the annual meeting for consideration.

The Appleton League Annual meeting was held on May 10, 2012 at Liberty Hall. The members voted to adopt the Recommended Program: Updating the library position in light of the possibility of a proposal for building a new library in the future as well as a possible library referendum.

2012-2013 RECOMMENDED PROGRAM UPDATING APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY POSITION

Current Appleton LWV Position

VIII. APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY (1975) (D, E, F, G 1992)

- A. Develop programs to meet needs of special groups, for example: elderly, disabled, high school students, diverse communities, and new patrons.
- B. Bring staffing and funding up to levels recommended by the American Library Association.
- C. Encourage the Library Board to aggressively communicate its needs to both the Common Council and the public.
- D. Provide adequate materials in children's and young adult's sections.
 - 1. Update material.
 - 2. Explore utilizing Appleton Area School District libraries, particularly during summer months.
- E. Continued growth of Appleton requires a serious look at expanding the library or planning for a branch library.
- F. Provide adequate funding for staff development.
- G. Publicize programs, collections, and services so that the public is aware of ways in which to use the library.

A Non-recommended program item was moved to consider: "The big picture of women in the health system and their access to health care" which was proposed from Lively Issues. An objection to the Non-recommended item as a local study was that women's access to health care is a regional, state, and national issue. The motion did not carry. It was suggested that the League sponsor speaker forums on the topic to educate both League members and the public.

*Sara Companik
Program*

More Program Updates...

Food for Thought Luncheon

April 18

The Appleton League of Women Voters held its second Food for Thought Luncheon on April 18 at The Kensington Grille. The restaurant owners opened their Grille for lunch to accommodate our group.

“Neighborhoods as the Heart and Soul of Community Development and Civic Engagement” was the topic of our speakers: Julie Filapek, the Coordinator for Sustainable Fox Valley Neighborhoods Initiative and Quasan Shaw who works for the Appleton City Community and Economic Development Department. They engaged the group in a conversation about communities and memories of growing up in connected communities where neighbors knew their neighbors. A walk down memory lane led to the discussion of how communities have changed over the years when people do not feel connected to their neighbors. We learned about the pilot project of Sustainable Fox Valley and the City of Appleton’s Neighborhood Revitalization Program just north of downtown Appleton. Columbus School/Arbutus Park neighborhood has been the site of the first supported citizen partnership to identify and build on community assets. We enjoyed hearing from Pat, one of the Columbus School/Arbutus Park neighbors, who became involved in this project and praised its effects on the neighborhood.

Sustainable Fox Valley recently received an allocation of Community Development Block Grant funding from the City of Appleton to launch a neighborhood-organizing project in core city neighbors surrounding downtown. With this funding, Sustainable Fox Valley will build upon work already begun just north of downtown, where neighbors have come together to reclaim and revitalize Arbutus Park. The Sustainable Fox Valley Neighborhoods Initiative provides technical assistance, resources and a framework for planning and action to help people work together towards a common vision for quality of life and sustainability.

*Sara Companik
Program*

Appleton League of Women Voters

Privatization Study

The National League of Women Voters study of Privatization is in its final phase of consensus. Twelve Appleton League members met on April 26 to discuss LWV materials, and to add their voice to the consensus. The scope was to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state, or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

Members had been referred to the www.lwv.org/member-resources/privatization to read study material. The group watched a PowerPoint presentation from the National League website as a preview to the discussion. Then members summarized study articles they had read on the topic of privatization which led to the discussion of local privatization in Appleton, Outagamie County, and Wisconsin. We discussed areas such as health and human services, highways, corrections, education, waste disposal, environmental issues, and others.

Privatization is defined as the shifting of activities from the public sector to the private sector. There are a variety of ways to do this. The group discussed some ways such as:

- a) Privatization by attrition- Cessation of public programs
- b) Transfer of assets-Sale or lease of public land, buildings, enterprises
- c) Contracting out-Finance private services (public/private partnerships)
- d) A spectrum from total privatization to partial privatization

The variety of ways to privatization is a complex undertaking, which requires a major commitment of resources and requires a set of criteria to be considered when making decisions to transfer from government to the private sector. The public sector view of promoting the general welfare is in contrast to the private sector for the benefit of one or more individuals. The members emphasized-Accountability, transparency, and a “fallback plan” - as important criteria when private sector contracts are signed.

The group voted on the Consensus Questions with some No consensus votes. You can find the consensus questions and decide where you stand. Go to

www.lwv.org/content/consensus-questions-introduction%C2%A0

In June 2012 the LWVUS Board of Directors reviews these consensus results.

*Sara Companik
Program*

Your Representatives

President Barack Obama

president@whitehouse.gov

US Senators

Wisconsin Senator: Herb Kohl

Wisconsin Senator: Ron Johnson

US House Representatives

6th Congressional District, Thomas Petri of Outagamie County

8th Congressional District, Reid Ribble of Outagamie County.

Governor: Scott Walker

Lt. Governor: Rebecca Kleefisch

Attorney General: J.B. Van Hollen

Secretary of State: Doug La Follette

Wisconsin State Senators:

Senate District 19 – Michael Ellis

Wisconsin State Assembly

57th - Penny Bernard Schaber

56th - Michelle Litjens

40th - Kevin Petersen

6th - Gary Tauchen

5th - Jim Steineke

3rd - Alvin Ott

State Assembly – according to district

search <http://waml.legis.state.wi.us/Index.aspx>

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