

## English Rhetoric

Welcome League members and guests to the annual meeting of the Appleton League of Women Voters. Thank you all for coming. I'd like to start off by recognizing some very special members here with us tonight. Barb Hoffman, Corrine Goldgar and Marion Ming are all long time League members and all are past presidents of the Appleton LWV. We would not be having this meeting were it not for the many years of volunteer service provided by these women. The Appleton community and the Appleton League are indebted to them for their years of service.

This marks the half way point of my presidency and many of the board members' terms of office. This year's board was delightful to work with. We really functioned as co-presidents. Each board member took a piece of the job and ran with it. We relied on each other for advice; came together for support; helped when asked. Our styles complemented each other and we enjoyed ourselves. Let's give them a round of applause for their efforts.

The archive project: Marlys and Marcia were able to put the bulk of material they and the rest of the committee sifted through onto a CD. We talked about how best to get that out to the members until Appleton Public Library kindly offered to post the League Archives on the Fox Valley Memory website. Barb Kelly plans to make the information contained on the CD searchable. She'll put a link to our League website. We, in turn, will put a link to Fox Valley Memory on our website. The history contained there is fascinating. I hope you all get a chance to see it. There are also several boxes of material looking for a home. The library will find space for a couple of boxes, but the board is reluctant to toss the original material. We're looking for a place to store all the material together in one place. We'll keep you posted.

We have already laid the ground work for an ambitious League year.

The state LWV has asked Appleton and Green Bay to host the debates for the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional seat being vacated by Mark Green. Green Bay League will host the primary debate and Appleton will host the fall debate.

We are in the second year of two 2 year state studies—Voting Rights and Energy. The background material is now available from the state League for both studies. We will be holding general meetings around both of those topics. The state League will ask us to consider consensus questions for new state positions.

Sometime in late August we will find out if the US State Department grant has been approved for an international exchange partnership with Kaopsowar/Kerio Valley in Kenya. World Services in Lacrosse and the other partners are

expecting to gear up in late summer. It will be a commitment with a lot of potential for new activities. I hope you are looking forward to doing this as much as I am.

Our newest fledgling is a more robust website. The board sees the web as a good community outreach tool as well as a way to keep members better informed. We used the website extensively during the election, calling attention to it in press releases and during the forum. It needs to be continuously updated, though, to stay relevant. So, that will be our challenge, to use the web between elections.

You are going to be planning the local study in a few minutes, so I want you to be aware of the commitments we already have made. As this year's board planned for last year, we struggled to find a long range strategy for League. We wanted to deal with financial issues, attracting new members, rising dues, and community visibility. This is your League, though! So, we thought offering a strategic planning meeting was the right thing to do to get direction from the membership. We would like more input from the membership to determine where the future should take us. May 18 there will be a general meeting designed for strategic planning. We will meet at 5 pm at the Appleton School Board meeting room on the second floor of the City Center. Jan Quinlan will facilitate the meeting. We will break for a light supper and you are invited to stay. After the break the old and new boards will continue to meet. If you can come, please mark your calendar.

I have taken up enough of the time. Let's get on with the meeting!

Have a great summer.

**Beth**