

## **President's Report**

### **Linda Bjella**

The League of Women Voters of Appleton-Fox Cities has grown in both membership and outreach over the past year.

Our voter services assisted over 500 people to register to vote at the county DMV office, tabling at numerous community events, and at high schools, colleges, and senior living facilities. This spring, we sponsored in-person candidate forums for city, town, and school district contests which were recorded and posted on our website along with Vote411 information.

We presented monthly educational forums on wide-ranging topics based on issues raised by our members at our annual Lively Issues meeting: local green initiatives, reproductive health care, the crisis for the unhoused and for childcare in our community, and financing of public and private education.

Together with the Winnebago County League, we also jointly sponsored our 6th virtual Fox Cities Legislative Town Hall. All Fox Valley legislators were invited, and we were pleased to once again have bi-partisan participation, providing an opportunity for local citizens to exchange views with their elected representatives.

We adopted a preamble which clearly states that our DEI policy applies to all of our local positions developed over the past 60 years. A small team has worked to re-format those positions, developed over the past 60 years, to make them more consistent with national and state League positions. A strong study team has now begun a new two-year local study of public safety examining the issue from the perspective of crime prevention and corrections.

A Book Share group enjoys deepening their understanding of DEI-related issues together. The group alternates monthly meetings for either late afternoon coffee or early evening wine.

Many of our community activists meet bi-monthly on Zoom as part of our Executive Action Team. This keeps our League connected to other local nonpartisan groups and provides more opportunities for advocacy. We also have an active Observer Corps which monitors local government meetings. This enables our League leaders to offer timely public comment on several occasions.

We have a robust website which is a community resource for reliable, non-partisan information. Our communications director keeps our social media updated, produces an outstanding monthly newsletter, and provides frequent press releases on our League's activities to keep us connected to local media.

While all these activities have been important for our League, it was a news conference we organized in March that was by far the most significant endeavor we have undertaken in recent memory. Again, partnering with the Winnebago League, we issued a call to action following the guidelines of the US League's February letter to Congress. This event was covered by all three local TV networks and drew an overflow crowd at our library. Our two Leagues jointly sent letters to Senators Baldwin and Johnson and Congressmen Tony Wied and Glenn Grothman, calling on them to uphold their oaths to the Constitution and stand up to the disturbing overreach through Executive Actions. We also provided postcards with the League's "Oath to Democracy" so attendees could send them to their elected representatives as well. It felt good to take a stand for democracy!

### **Action Vice President's Report**