



PO Box 175
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Our Mission...

The League of Women Voters of Ashland & Bayfield Counties (LWV/ABC) is a nonpartisan political organization whose main objective is to promote political responsibility through the informed and active participation of all citizens in government at all levels, especially locally.

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The Leaguer

February - March 2019



How To Turn The Desert of NW Wisconsin Into An Oasis-Kind Of

By Jan Penn

Have you been frustrated by the difficulty accessing news from Wisconsin in a timely fashion? You are not alone. WPR does a great job, but even with the Superior station which covers regional news, the topics may not be as inclusive of issues specific to your interest and concerns. The Bottomline is welcomed especially regarding significant local news, but is only monthly.

Further, the Daily Press is being published less frequently and Wisconsin Public TV is not available to most of us. It can be said that we know more about Minnesota on any given day than Wisconsin via the Duluth TV and radio access.

As LWV members and partners, we

know that engagement in policy-making is part of "Making Democracy Work." Not one of us can keep tabs on all aspects of what is going on with policymaking in Madison, let alone specific areas of interest be they Educational Policy, Tax Reform, Environmental Policy, Voting Policy, etc. Indeed this has been made harder by the News Desert we live in, but no longer.

Now you can begin to TURN your desert into an OASIS!

For quite a few years the Wisconsin Legislative Service has been available on line, but kept a bit of a secret. This Service is a user friendly opportunity for all Wisconsin residents to sign up for notification and updates on legislation of particular interest to them.

Oasis-Kind Of continued on 3



Anne Chartier, President

president@lwvabcwi.org

Greetings from our President

Gail Syverud also attended, and together with members from around the state we were fortunate to learn from truly worthwhile presentations. It was an impressive show of planning and facilitation on the part of our staff in Madison who brought together an outstanding slate of speakers on a wide range of relevant topics. You may want to consider going next year.

Meagan Wolfe, Interim Administrator of the Wisconsin Elections Commission, gave a Post-Election Review of Election Security in Wisconsin. Megan is the Chief Election Official of the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) which oversees elections and ultimately certifies the results. We have a statewide voter registration system. Its current version was built by Wisconsin and we are the largest user of Microsoft's CRM, used to develop and launch WisVote in 2016. Most states operate at the county level but Wisconsin does so at the municipal level, with 1853 elections officials throughout the state who know the voters and can detect issues. Training is a huge part of what the WEC does. They train the clerks who in turn train the poll workers. The Clerks do voter registration, are custodians of voter's records, and use the voter registration system. Many don't have IT support. There has been good success reporting issues and getting help. Counties

design and distribute the ballots. Federal funds have been used to train election officials regarding security. Cyber experts help understand vulnerabilities and conduct regular assessments. There is a voting equipment audit with random pieces tested after each election since 2006. Errors tend to be human. The law requires voters to be deactivated after 4 years of not voting; they get a postcard notification. There is no big hacking going on, we need to counter misinformation. We need to work with our clerks because ultimately they know best, and can help people understand. Not all states have Election Day registration!

We also heard from Jodi Habush Sinykin, Attorney with Midwest Environmental Advocates whose talk was titled In Defense of the Great Lakes Compact: LWVWI's Challenge to Wisconsin's Foxconn Diversion. Jodi explained that the challenge specifically focuses on the fact that the Foxconn plant being built in the Mt. Pleasant community of Racine County straddles between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The Great Lakes Compact specifies that water diversion within a straddling community should be limited to public use. The argument is that Foxconn is a commercial enterprise. The goal of this challenge is to protect the Compact, and thus Great Lakes water rights, by keeping the plant within the basin.

Louise Petering, State board member from Milwaukee County, who has been very active with this issue and has reached out to other State
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Greetings Leaguers!

By Anne Chartier, President

2019 has barely begun and we are already hearing from potential presidential candidates for 2020 when the League of Women Voters will turn 100. Those of you who tuned in for the inauguration of our new governor may have noticed that local student, Bella Wabindato, eloquently introduced Tony Evers during the ceremony. She is a remarkable young leader who makes our region proud!

News about Wisconsin, the United States and from around the world can be overwhelming, but you can be sure our organization is working hard at local, state and national levels to protect and further the political and human rights we hold dear.

Last November, shortly after the midterm election, I drove south for the League's Issues Briefing gathering at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton. Our nominations chair

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Leagues. Air quality is also of great concern.

I talked with Dorothy Skye, who had impressed me at last June's Annual Meeting in Oshkosh. She is a retired physician, president of the Northwoods League, and also sits on our State Board. She is working on healthcare and would welcome materials that could be used to convince legislators about the benefits of expanding care, and how to pay for it.

We also heard from two panels. The first, titled *United by Love, United Against Hate: Building and Inclusive Community*, was moderated by artist and activist Kelly Parks Snider, who with artist Rachel Griffin, created beautiful prints of women with powerful statements that were on display in the lobby. They were joined by Tracy Williams-Mackin, Interim Senior Director of External Relations, Partnerships, and Development of the Office of the Vice Provost & Chief Diversity Officer at UW-Madison, and Masood Akhtar, who founded *We Are Many: United Against Hate*. The title speaks for itself. Presenters talked about how segregated we still are. Suggestions for being inclusive are mingling and merging. The importance of conversation was highlighted. We should find out who the trusted leaders are and sit down with them. Share key best practices to help people be leaders and guide their communities. Art is attractive and brings people in. It was pointed out that the parts

we hide are perhaps our greatest strength. They talked about a community based participatory research model and an Art Lit Lab; also about matriarchs and love versus hate.

The second panel, titled *The Role of Media in Democracy*, was moderated by Joy Cardin former host of Wisconsin Public Radio. The three other panelists were Steven Walters, senior producer of WisconsinEye, Robert Chappell, associate publisher and editorial director for Madison365, and Jessica Arp, assistant news director and chief political reports for WISC-TV News 3 and Channel3000.com. All four talked about the difficulty of reaching some politicians, and discerning the truth about the facts. When they are unable to conduct an interview to ask questions, they must rely on what people have communicated in statements to the public in a variety of settings. Interestingly, public relations people outnumber journalists 4 to 1.

As this New Year unfolds, let's celebrate all the important work our LWV/ABC Committees are doing. If you haven't already, please consider joining one or more to share your interests and talents. Thank you for your help and support in Making Democracy Work!

– Anne Chartier



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STEPS:

1. Sign into legis.wisconsin.gov. On the top left (under pictures), click NOTIFICATION SERVICE

2. Create an account

3. Login and then begin selecting. (Options)

-You can choose a specific topic such as Mining or Education and you will receive notification on legislation specific only to the topic(s).

-You can select a particular Committee, e.g.. Joint Finance, Natural Resources, etc.

-You can choose the name of our elected official(s) and you will be notified as they author bills.

-You can select the option to only be notified about a specific bill that you become aware of via a friend, blog, or when Rep Meyer or Senator Bewley author a bill.

You control the amount and type of information you receive from the Service and can add or delete notifications at any time.

The next act is very individual and based on your time and style. Knowing about legislation may expand your engagement in conversations with family/friends. You may choose to take it a step further and contact local officials, write an entire Committee in Madison, write a letter to the editor or approach the LWV/ABC Board about taking action on an issue.

In any correspondence, please remember that the LWV can only be cited officially by the President

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of the local LWV or designees, and it needs to be based on positions voted upon by our local LWV, LWV-WI or LWVUS. Your correspondence, emails, letters, etc. are your personal view, which as a private voting citizen highly powerful.

Over the last few years, members have repeatedly asked, "what can I do"? You can sign up for the Wisconsin Legislative Service as a start. Knowledge is power. As we see a newly elected and appointed set of officials at the helm of Wisconsin leadership, we can use this knowledge to move Wisconsin FORWARD!

Contact your representatives:

US Senator Tammy Baldwin

<https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/feedback>, (202) 224-5653

US Senator Ron Johnson

<https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-the-senator>
(202) 224-5323

US House Representative

Sean Duffy

<https://duffy.house.gov/contact/email-me>
(202) 225-3365

WI State Senator Janet Bewley

Sen.Bewley@legis.wisconsin.gov,
(608) 266-3510

WI State Representative

Beth Meyers

Rep.Meyers@legis.wisconsin.gov,
(608) 237-9174

LWV CALENDAR

February

Monday 11

Voter Forum, Park Falls WI

Thursday 14

League's Birthday

Monday 18

President's Day

Tuesday 19

Spring Primary, 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Tuesday 26

Board Meeting, Sandbar, Ashland

March

Thursday 7

End Childhood Poverty Event

Wednesday 8

International Women's Day

Tuesday 26

Board Meeting, Sandbar, Ashland

April

Tuesday 7

Spring Elections, 7 am – 8 pm

Sunday 21

Earth Day

Tuesday 23

Board Meeting, Sandbar, Ashland

May

Date TBA

Annual Meeting – TBD

Monday 27

Memorial Day

June

Saturday 8

LWVWI Annual Meeting, Green Lake WI

Monday 10

100th Anniversary of WI being the first to ratify the 19th Amendment

Friday 14

Flag Day



2018/2019 ABC LWV Board & Committee Members

BOARD

Contact the Board at:

info@lwwabcwi.org or
PO Box 175, Ashland, WI 54806

Anne Chartier, **President**

Sheila Mitchell, **Vice President**

Barb Bell, **Treasurer**

Ginger Quay, **Secretary**

Joan Elias

Mary Hassett Gabrys

Linda Jorgenson

Dianne Judd

Jan Penn

Bruce Prentice

Liz Seefeldt

Mary Jo Tuckwell

COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

Anne Chartier, President

Sheila Mitchell, Vice President

Barb Bell, Treasurer

Ginger Quay, Secretary

Mary Jo Tuckwell, Membership

Membership Committee

Mary Jo Tuckwell, Chair

Voter Services

Mary Hassett Gabrys, Chair

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Communications Committee

Dianne Judd, Chair

Dee Johnson, Facebook

Anne Chartier, Email Blasts

Liz Seefeldt, Bottom Line Liaison

Pete Skoro, Newsletter & Website

Natural Resources Advocacy Committee

Joan Elias, Chair

Inequality Action Committee

Linda Jorgenson & Jan Penn, Chairs

Civic Engagement Committee

Liz Seefeldt, Chair

Program & Events Committee

Sheila Mitchell, Chair

Finance Committee

Barb Bell, Treasurer

Linda Jorgenson

Nominating Committee

Gail Syverud, Chair

Betty Schell

Dianne Judd, Board Liaison

Feel free to visit a committee meeting at any time. Join a committee and get involved with our work.

**Contact us at:
info@lwwabcwi.org**

**CHANGE
STARTS HERE.
CAN WE COUNT YOU IN?**

Natural Resources Advocacy Committee

By Joan Elias, Committee Chair

The Issues and Advocacy Committee renamed itself the Natural Resources Advocacy Committee, as the majority of our focus is on natural resource issues. Our work is guided by, and must be consistent with, LWV state and national positions.

The broad, overall position of the LWV is "Support of a physical environment beneficial to life; action to promote wise use of ground and surface water resources and improvement of water, air, and soil quality." Under this umbrella are specific positions on

- Standards and Enforcement
- Energy
- Air & Land Policies
- Solid Waste Management
- Water Quality
- Pesticides
- Great Lakes Ecosystem

Because the quality of water is of utmost importance to us here on the shores of the largest freshwater lake in the world, our local LWV chapter played a critical role in developing the position on water quality, which was adopted by LWVWI in 2014. What follows is a brief summary of the Water Quality Position.

Maintaining clean water and managing water as a natural resource is a public trust, which means that the State of Wisconsin, including the state Supreme Court, the Legislature, and the Executive Branch, along with the citizens of the state,

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Nat. Res. Continued from page 5
have the responsibility of protecting and preserving the waters of the state. We recognize that protection of water quality requires management of entire watersheds – the surrounding lands that drain into waterways. A lake, river, or stream is not an isolated water body, but part of an integrated ecosystem, and must be treated as such. We promote sustainable uses of water resources that are consistent with the support of native species of plants and animals and that maintain the quality and quantity of water resources for future generations.

The LWVWI position supports a variety of specific actions and pro-

grams to protect water quality and quantity such as adequate funding for routine testing and monitoring, local authority to enforce standards, respect for Tribal sovereignty regarding water resources, and standards for point and non-point sources of wastewater and runoff.

Of particular interest to our Natural Resources Advocacy Committee is the part of the LWVWI position that states: "Work to eliminate all emergency discharges or spills of untreated sewage, or waste or polluting materials into the environment that threaten public health and the environment by potentially contaminating sources of clean water for humans, wildlife habitat

and fisheries." Sanitary system overflows occur throughout the Great Lakes, especially during large storm events, and you may remember the news about the City of Ashland's overflows this past summer. Our Committee is beginning to partner with city and county staff to raise awareness of and mitigate this problem. Watch for updates on our work in future newsletters.

The LWVWI positions can be found at <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/positions>



SPRING ELECTIONS 2019

By Mary Hassett Gabrys, Voter Services Chair

As we move into 2019, we have a new Governor as well as a number of new faces in the Senate and Assembly.

After a busy fall of getting voters registered, the Voter Services Committee took a break during the month of December.

If you thought the elections just got over, think again. We are now focused on the Nonpartisan Spring 2019 Elections. February 19 is the Primary and April 2 for the Election.

There will be a Wisconsin Supreme Court election with the retirement of Shirley Abrahamson. Two candi-

dates are running to fill the seat: Appeals Judge Brian Hagedorn and Appeals Chief Judge Lisa Neubauer. Although state Supreme Court elections in Wisconsin are non-partisan, liberal and conservative groups typically coalesce around specific candidates. Conservatives, who back Hagedorn, hold a 4-3 majority on the court heading into the election. If conservatives won this seat, it would expand their majority on the court to 5-2. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/wisconsin/articles/2019-01-02/deadline-for-state-supreme-court-candidacies-looms>

In addition to that race there are a number of local races that include: the Ashland City Council (3 of the 5 races will be contested), Washburn City Council (1 contested race) and Bayfield City Council (no contested race). There are no county supervisor elections scheduled but there

are several elections for boards in towns, cities and villages. We will not know about other races until after the town caucuses are completed end of January.

Ballots for the Spring Election can be found at <https://myvote.wi.gov>

Ballots are typically available 21 days before state and local contests. If you are not already registered to vote you can register at <https://myvote.wi.gov>.

To be informed citizens I encourage everyone to read the candidate's bios and find out what their views are on the issues that are important to you. I also encourage you to watch for candidate forums this March. This is a great opportunity to meet the candidates and hear their responses to the questions from the audience.

A 2019 New Year's Resolution: Become an Active Member of LWV/ABC!

By Mary Jo Tuckwell, Membership Chair

Do you have a passion for ensuring voter rights, protecting water quality, accessing affordable health care, and/or eliminating economic inequality? Do you wish to see more civil dialogue and problem solving of these and many other social/environmental issues at all levels of government, then let your

Civic Engagement

Liz Seefeldt, Chair

"Speak Your Peace: The Civility Project" is a resource for building civic engagement. It provides civil and respectful tools for people as they present their views and discuss issues. Our Civic Engagement committee has been promoting these nine tools to use in our committee and board work.

We urge citizens to use these nine tools of civility and communicate in a more respectful way.

1. Pay Attention.
2. Listen.
3. Be Inclusive.
4. Not Gossip.
5. Show Respect.
6. Be Agreeable.
7. Apologize.
8. Give Constructive Criticism.
9. Take Responsibility.

For more information:

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

voice be heard through active participation in League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties (LWV/ABC).

Not a member yet? Or perhaps have joined as a local member and are looking to upgrade to voting member status? Your LWV/ABC primary individual membership dues of \$65 are utilized to support the development of National, State of Wisconsin as well as local League nonpartisan position statements and action initiatives to promote and protect our democracy. Some of these initiatives are described in this newsletter. If you are a student (minimum age 16) enrolled in an accredited academic institution your membership is currently free. For more information about levels of membership and to receive a membership application please contact maryjo.tuckwell@yahoo.com.

Are you already a LWV/ABC member but not actively involved? As you can see from the newsletter articles, our local activities are achieved through collaboration of members with different interests and skills to achieve annual program goals. Formally League work

is carried out through our Elected Officers and a Board of Directors as well as through independent work in a variety of committees. We would love to help you match your passions, skills and degree of time available to become more involved. Do you love to arrange social events? Are you skilled in public speaking or group facilitation? Are you a behind the scenes detail person, perhaps with skills in finance and budgeting? Are you a techie person with knowledge of Google Docs, Facebook and/or Web page maintenance? Do you have a working knowledge of Excel and Word? Do you have experience in grant writing or fundraising? Do you have experience in marketing or graphic design? What amount of time per month would you like to volunteer? If you are looking for an opportunity to become more involved let us know at info@abcleaguevoters.org. Very soon the LWV/ABC Nominating Committee will be starting to contact members regarding their interest in serving on next year's Board. If you are interested in becoming a Board member please contact Gail Syverud at gsyverud@centurytel.net.

Thank You

Thank you to our committed and engaged members and friends of LWV/ABC. You have registered voters, called your representatives, attended events and meetings, encouraged and supported the Board with your time and money. You are the backbone of helping our League reach its goals and commitments in the community.

Thank you to our dynamic Board of Directors. You show up at Board meetings; set priorities & goals for our local league; engage with community members and organizations, focus on specific committee work by bringing forth advocacy and action. *You are the Directors that determine the course of our League while representing LWV's mission.* To you we are grateful.

Get the latest News from State!

lwvwi.org, go to <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin>

Sign up for Action Alerts from LWV-WI.org at

<https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/sign-news-alerts>

To get the latest News from National LWV.org, go to <https://www.lwv.org/>

HR1: For the People Act

4 Key elements of HR1:

<https://www.lwv.org/blog/4-key-elements-hr1>

*Expand Voter Registration *Implement Fair Redistricting *Outlaw Voter Purging *Restore the VRA

Talking points: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/talking-points-templates/talking-points-hr1-people-act>

On Friday, January 4, HR1 was introduced in the House of Representatives. This bill comprises a bold, transformative set of reforms to strengthen our democracy and return political power to the people. The League of Women Voters has worked to influence the language of this bill to ensure that voting rights are strengthened by this important legislation. LWV has done so within the Declaration for American Democracy coalition.

While we do support the legislation, we recognize that it is not a perfect bill. There are pieces of it that the League will not promote or work to advance. State and local Leagues who are interested in supporting HR1 publicly should focus on the

SPRING PLANS FOR THE INEQUALITY ACTION COMMITTEE

The Committee continues its discussion, study and planning for how to build a local coalition to join the statewide End Child Poverty Campaign. Organizations such as the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities have very good studies showing how much programs such as food stamps, rental assistance, Medicaid and the Earned Income Tax Benefit have cut poverty in our country since 1967. The Committee feels it is important to get some of that information out more broadly in our community.

To that end the Committee has developed a PowerPoint presentation and an information packet. It was successfully used at a talk to the Ashland Rotary on November 27. Further presentations to other organizations are planned. Signatures are also being collected to send down to the campaign headquarters at the WI Council of Churches. It is hoped that when there are 10,000 signatures the Campaign can approach the Legislature to introduce bills to "end child poverty."

On Thursday, March 7 the LWV/ABC will host John Wagner from an End Child Poverty group in Chippewa Falls. He will focus on the cost savings to tax payers of offering evidence-based services to poor children vs. delaying anti-poverty interventions until people reach adulthood. It will be held at the Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center from 6:30-8:30 pm. He will also meet on Friday morning with leaders of local anti-poverty organizations.

If you are interested in joining this effort please contact Jan at jan-mmpenn@yahoo.com, or 715-274-2942, or Linda at jorgensonla@gmail.com or 715-373-2948.

following messages:

Why we need a comprehensive package of democracy reforms:

- It should be easier, not harder, to vote. The For the People Act improves access to voting with reforms like Same Day Registration and Automatic Voter Registration.
- More needs to be done to protect voters' voices. The For the People Act requires independent redistricting commissions, ends voter roll purges based on failure to vote, and restores the Voting Rights Act.

spond to the will of the people, not the interests of powerful corporations and wealthy donors.

- The For the People Act includes strong provisions for improving transparency in campaign finance and strengthening government ethics enforcement.

As an organization with a mission of empowering voters and defending democracy, the League of Women Voters is proud to support legislation that does the same. Urge them to vote in favor of HR1.