

The Leaguer

January - March 2018



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The New Year's Resolution: Taking Action on Inequality in 2018

By Linda Jorgenson

The transferring of wealth from the poor and middle class (especially from the rural areas) to our country's richest citizens, on the massive scale as written into the recent tax bill, makes our LWV/ABC efforts to advocate for greater economic fairness seem minuscule at best.

So, to engender some fortitude, it might be instructive to look back at our League *herstory*. One hundred years ago, in 1918 (two years before the passage of the 19th amendment), women's suffrage also seemed like a vain cause. The US was preoccupied with entering World War I. The women's suffrage movement was divided. The "Red Scare" was rounding up and deporting immigrants who champi-

oned the working-class struggles. German immigrants were being demonized. Big business interests, led by the wives of big capitalists, bankrolled associations opposed to women's suffrage. The influenza pandemic was raging.

Yet women in the National Women's Suffrage Association led by Wisconsinite Carrie Chapman Catt, and the more militant Woman's Party led by Alice Paul just doubled down their efforts. They maintained their extensive nationwide speaking tours. They made sure there were strong chapters in all 48 states. They pushed the passage of women's suffrage state by state. They mobilized the influential women in key Congressional Districts to

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Greetings from our Co-Presidents



Dianne Judd

president@lwvwi.org

Liz Seefeldt

lizseefeldt@cheqnet.net

It's widely acknowledged that the core purpose of the League of Women Voters is to work for voter access and to support an informed electorate. We have plenty to work for in 2018, with most likely four 2018 elections: the Spring Primary – February 20th, the Spring Election – April 3rd, the Partisan Primary – August 14th, and the Partisan General Election – November 6th.

The local League is focusing on what's happening right here at home. For now we're thinking of the February and April ballots. All offices on these ballots are non-partisan. First of all, we want to get the word out about what's on the ballots. Here's the rundown:

SPRING PRIMARY – 2/20/18:

Statewide

Justice of the Supreme Court - Tim Burns, Rebecca Dallet, and Michael Srenock.

SPRING ELECTION - 4/3/18

Statewide

Justice of the Supreme Court candidates will be determined by the Spring Primary. There will be a referendum to eliminate the position of State Treasurer.

Ashland County Board

Most are running unopposed. A list of the current Ashland County Board of Supervisors can be found at a link on this page of the County's website: <http://co.ashland.wi.us/boardsandcommittees>. No one has declared their candidacy or filed nomination papers for Districts 3, 4 and 19 and these seats will be filled by write-in candidates. District 12 is the only contested seat with candidates Joe Rose of Ashland (incumbent), Michael Starck of LaPointe.

Bayfield County

Most are running unopposed. A list of the current Bayfield County Board of Supervisors can be found on the County's website: <https://www.bayfieldcounty.org/295/Board-of-Supervisors>. Contested seats are District 2 - Tom Gordon and Patrick Quaintance, District 10 - Rachel Coughtry (incumbent) and Marty Milanowski, and District 11 - David Zepczyk and Dee Kittleson.

Municipalities

City of Ashland Mayor and Wards 1, 3, 7, 9, and 11 are all uncontested. Ward 5 candidates are Mary Asbach and Ana Tochtermann.

All Towns with five-member boards will have two supervisors seats on the ballots.

The Town of Iron River Sanitary Commissioner is on the ballot.

School Districts all have seats on the ballot.

The Maple School District, affecting the Towns of Hughes, Iron River, and Oulu in Bayfield County, will have a 3-year operating referendum.

These are a lot of races and issues to track, yet we know that our individual vote carries much more weight in a local election. That's why the League will be working hard to help keep us all informed about the candidates and the issues. We'll be coordinating candidate forums and continue with voter registration.

Won't you please join us in that

effort? Contact Bev Lindell with our Voter Services team to pitch in. You can be a part of something BIG: Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy.

**Dianne Judd & Liz Seefeldt
Co-Presidents**

Living Wage continued from 1 lobby their legislators. They tirelessly wrote for their local newspapers. Alice Paul's Woman's Party picketed the White House, got themselves arrested, went on hunger strikes in prison and won a lot of public sympathy by their devotion to their cause, including President Wilson who had been anti-suffrage.

In 1918, their tenacity and hard work was beginning to pay off. The tide began to turn. States that had passed women's suffrage elected new pro-suffrage men to Congress in the 1918 election. On June 4, 1919, the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote finally passed. It took another year, and another uphill battle, for ratification by the necessary two thirds of the states. It ended with the state of Tennessee passing the Amendment by two votes in August 1920. (Wisconsin was the first state to ratify). The League of Women Voters- US was founded in February of 1920 to educate voters.

So, while our local League's efforts to push back against economic inequality and the dangers it presents to democracy are daunting, we press forward with the confidence that "the tide will turn." The "Living Wages" Committee continues its efforts to enlist local and statewide allies to build a grassroots "Living Wage Economy" movement. Two Northland professors and some of their students have expressed interest in working with us. The "Health Care for All" Committee has also been developing its advocacy plan. All are welcome to join.

Contact either Linda Jorgenson (715-373-2948) for information regarding the Living Wages Committee, or Jan Penn (715-274-2942) regarding information on the Health Care Committee.

Committee meeting dates:

Living Wages Committee:

Tuesday, February 15, 2018
Washburn Public Library, 5 PM,
Greenwood Room

Health Care Committee

Wednesday, February 7, 2018
Vaughn Public Library, 5 PM Ashland



Gerrymandering and Voting: An Evening with Dan Theno

By Parker Sterling, member

On January 31, 2018, the League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties will offer a public forum at the Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center at 6:30 pm with Dan Theno, the former mayor of Ashland, Wisconsin, and a 4-term Wisconsin State Senator. Mr. Theno, who is now involved in the Fair Elections Project, will speak on gerrymandering, redistricting, and the current Supreme Court Case of Gill v. Whitford, which involves the recent Wisconsin redistricting.

Mr. Theno's talk will not only focus on Wisconsin's role in the larger national discussion on this important topic, but will also offer insights into how the Fair Elections Project – a nonpartisan project of the High Ground Institute – is working with citizens across this state and in other states "to change how politics works in the United States and help end the partisan gridlock that grips the nation."

Gerrymandering, redistricting, and free and fair elections are critical components of the mission of the League of Women Voters as we work to "promote transparent and accountable redistricting processes" and "to end hyper-partisan practices that don't benefit constituents." The LWV/ABC is hopeful that Mr. Theno's talk will reach a number of people and inspire vibrant and robust discussions on gerrymandering, redistricting, and their roles in the election process.

There will be a question and answer session following Mr. Theno's talk. Information on voting, redistricting, the Fair Elections Project, and the League of Women Voters will be available starting at 6 pm.

For more information about the League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties, please visit our website at www.lwvabcwi.org. For more information about the Fair Elections Project, please visit www.fairelectionsproject.org.

LWV/ABC "Disclaimer Message

"The League of Women Voters, a

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2017/2018 ABC LWV Board & Committee Members

BOARD

Contact the Board at:
info@lwvabcwi.org, or
PO Box 175, Ashland, WI 54806

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2018 Membership Renewals

Many thanks to all the members and guests who were able to attend the annual holiday dinner at Good Thyme restaurant. It was a beautiful evening and a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends old and new.

Keeping track of when memberships are up for renewal is not always easy. If you are due for renewal you can expect to receive a reminder via e-mail, postal mail, or perhaps even a friendly phone call.

A grateful thank you to the following individuals who have recently re-joined:

Kim Bro

Mary Rehwald

The “Lively Issues” Annual Meeting

By Kathy Allen

On Tuesday, January 30 at 6:30pm at the Vaughn Public Library in Ashland (upstairs in the large Meeting Room) the League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties will have their annual meeting to discuss “lively issues.” It is a great opportunity to discuss and debate issues that concern us at a time when our nation is severely divided.

We need to identify any issues that are new and that haven't been previously considered by the League. And we will need to consider whether our past positions are outdated and need to be up-graded. Also, we can consider whether our positions are clearly something that we can take action on.

We will consider issues as they relate to the national level, the state level, and the local level. Feel free to look up our positions on various issues at both the state and national level. (I will try to have a hard copy of these positions available at the public libraries in Ashland, Washburn, and Bayfield). Also, as we get additional information regarding this discussion from the state and national boards, we'll send it along to you.

*So put on your thinking caps. **For democracy to work and thrive, we need active and informed citizens!***

LWV CALENDAR

January

Tuesday 2

24:30 Executive Meeting

Thursday 4

5:30 Restoring Democracy through Fair Elections planning Meeting

Tuesday 9

5:00 Living Wages Committee Meeting Washburn Library-Greenwood Room

Tuesday 9

5:00 Health Care Committee: Vaughn Library, Ashland

Monday 23

5:30 Board Meeting

Tuesday 30

6:30 pm Lively Issues Meeting Vaughn Library, Ashland

Wednesday 31

6:30 pm Restoring Democracy Through Fair Election Community Event, NGLVC

February

Tuesday 6

4:30 Membership/Leadership Development

Wednesday 7

Health Care Committee: 5 PM, Literacy Room Vaughn Library, Ashland

Thursday 15

Living Wages Committee: 5 PM, Vaughn Library, Ashland

Tuesday 20

“Determinants of Community Wellbeing/Health”, Vaughn meeting room (more info later), Ashland Spring Primary Elections

Tuesday 20

Tuesday 27

Board Meeting

March

Tuesday 6

Executive Committee Meeting

Tuesday 27

Board Meeting

April

Tuesday 3

Spring Elections

Thank You!

At the Charlene Mouille event in September ("The Rise of the Working Poor") there was a collection taken to assist with the recent hurricane devastation in Puerto Rico. \$120.00 was raised for AmeriCares.

Although the amount seemed not so much, this amount actually transmitted to a value of \$2400.00 in aid.

Thanks to all who threw some money into the pot!



An Excerpt from the Brennan Center for Justice Article:

5 Things to Know About the Wisconsin Partisan Gerrymandering Case

By Michael Li, Thomas Wolf, June 19, 2017

Michael C. Li serves as senior counsel for the Brennan Center's Democracy Program, where his work focuses on redistricting, voting rights, and elections. Thomas P. Wolf is counsel with the Democracy Program, focusing on redistricting issues.

What makes the gerrymander in Wisconsin especially bad?

Gerrymandering comes in many varieties, but the kind of gerrymandering that took place this decade in Wisconsin (and a handful of other states) is among the worst. This kind of aggressive gerrymandering doesn't just pre-determine electoral results, but also locks in a disproportionate and unfair advantage for one party over the other — making maps unresponsive to voters



Credit: Chris Chastine / Flickr

Chris Chastine

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nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase the understanding of major public policy issues, and influences pub-

lic policy through education and advocacy.

in individual districts and deeply unrepresentative of the electorate as a whole.

At a statewide level, Wisconsin is a quintessential battleground where races are often decided by only a few percentage points. Contrast that to the state assembly map the Republicans drew: In 2012, they won 60 of the 99 seats in the Wisconsin Assembly despite winning only 48.6% of the two-party state-wide vote; in 2014, they won 63 seats with only 52% of the state-wide vote.

This is an odd outcome for a state

like Wisconsin, where statewide elections are very close, and voters for both major parties are fairly evenly spread across the state. Voters in Wisconsin, like voters in battleground states in general, are not starkly clustered by party. For example, there are substantial pockets of Democratic voters in places like Vernon County and other rural and small towns, where Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton nearly evenly split the vote. The fact that Wisconsin's Legislature doesn't reflect this political diversity is, in large part, intentional.

Restoring Democracy through Fair Elections: Gerrymandering and Voting

An Evening with Senator Dan Theno

Introduction by Ashland Mayor, Deb Lewis

January 31, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center

Martin Hanson Theater, 29270 Co Hwy G, Ashland, WI 54806



Mr. Theno will speak on redistricting, the current Supreme Court case of Gill v. Whitford, pending WI Legislation for independent and Fair Maps, how both parties been involved, and how extreme gerrymandering creates polarization in politics.

Presentation will be followed by a Q and A.
Bring your questions.

The League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties will offer a free public forum with Dan Theno, former Mayor of Ashland, and 4-term State Senator (R) from the 25th District. He is currently retired, lives in Green Bay WI, and involved in civic affairs, including WI Fair Elections Project.



The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase the understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy LWV/ABC does not support any political party or candidate for partisan office.