

The **LWW** [®] **VOTER**

League of Women Voters - Janesville

www.lwvjvl.org

December 2018

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Communications from the President



Dear Friends in League,

Last Tuesday evening, Gale Price, the Director of Economic Development for the City of Janesville, gave us an excellent analysis of the history and development of the housing shortage in Janesville, and he explained how the housing shortage relates to the ability of the city to attract new business to the community. Price also explained how the city is attempting to use TIF, WHEDA funding and other incentives and tools such as Planned Use Developments (PUDs) to encourage developers to build new multi-family properties and subdivisions of single-family homes.



Gale Price, City of Janesville

Price also discussed efforts to encourage local landlords who own vacant properties in Janesville to invest in their buildings and earn profits from the rents paid by occupants. He

also encourages owners of buildings in downtown Janesville to develop or upgrade apartments in the upper floors of their buildings.

Price noted that Janesville needs to have housing properties available that span the range from units that are affordable for lower income residents all the way up to “executive-level” properties. He noted that some out-of-town developers are beginning to see the opportunities that Janesville can offer



Al Hulick, City of Milton

them, and he encouraged audience members to spread the word.

Our next program, “The Challenges and Success of Economic Development in Milton” will be led by Al Hulick, City Administrator for Milton. The program is scheduled for Thursday, January 10,



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★ President

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at 6:30 pm, in the Council Chambers of Milton City Hall, 710 S. Janesville St. in Milton.

I want to extend a special “thank you” to Carolyn Brandeen who represented us and the Beloit League in speaking on behalf of retaining the county parks’ community coordinator as a full-time position. The Boards of both Leagues believed that supporting this position would be in keeping with our Leagues’ joint position on the Rock County Parks. (You can read the position on our website at: http://lwvjvl.org/local_positions.html#s11). Carolyn wrote (on November 13):

The 2019 county budget passed this morning with the park’s community coordinator position at full time — see the park’s manager [John Traynor] email pasted

below.

I agree: funding for the position should come from the tax levy not from the American Transmission Company (ATC) easement which is designated for enhancement of the park system.

But for now it was my pleasure to stand with almost a dozen other advocates at the public hearing for the budget and achieve our main goal.

~ Carolyn

Just a quick update, the Community Coordinator position was passed as a full time position with the balance (.6) to be paid with ATC funds. Given that, it is up to us to make sure that we push next year to have it funded by the County Budget. Thank you all for your support !

John Traynor



League of Women Voters Wisconsin

CALL TO ACTION

The 2018 Fall Elections are just behind us, and we already need to be concerned about the dates for the 2020 Spring Elections in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin state legislature is meeting in special session December, and they plan to consider a proposal to move the presidential primary from April to March. The LWVWI has taken the position that this move would cause voter confusion, increase election official fatigue, waste millions of tax dollars, and possibly have disastrous consequences if a recount is needed between elections.

As it stands now two elections are scheduled for spring of 2020, a nonpartisan primary in February for state Supreme Court and local offices, and an election in April that would be the general election for the nonpartisan offices and the partisan presidential primary.

The League strongly opposes this measure because it would be confusing for voters and would likely suppress voting. Asking municipal and county clerks to engage in overlapping elections is extremely unwise from security and procedural perspectives. County and municipal clerks from across the state are opposing the proposal because of the high cost for local governments and the fact that it is logistically not possible.

Clerks would need to process absentee ballots for different elections at the same time which would run the risk that some ballots would get in the wrong batch and not get counted. Poll workers would need to be persuaded to work an extra election. Voters might come to the polls to vote in one election only to discover a different one was being held.

Those of us who attended the LWVWI Issues Forum

in Middleton earlier in the month came away with an appreciation for the complexity of the job of building and maintaining a secure election administration system in the state.

Meagan Wolfe, the Interim Administrator of the Wisconsin Election Commission told us that Wisconsin’s election system is the most decentralized system in the nation. While most states have county clerks administer elections, Wisconsin gives the 1853 municipal clerks the responsibility for training poll workers, registering voters, issuing ballots, using the statewide voter registration system, and conducting absentee voting.

Fully 1/6 of all local elections officials in the nation are in Wisconsin.

There is a 30% annual turnover rate among municipal clerks.

2/3rds of municipal clerks are in part-time positions.

Municipal clerks train 30,000 poll workers for 2800 polling places in municipalities that range in population from 37 to over 595,000.

Most municipal clerks have limited IT support.

In Wisconsin, counties play a limited role in election administration. They design and distribute ballots, post unofficial election night results, and provide support to municipalities. Some counties contract with municipalities to provide services, and some procure and/or program voting equipment for municipalities.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the complexity of Wisconsin’s three-tiered elections system, it has worked

★ Action

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well under normal circumstances. The WEC has developed a thoughtful and well-integrated program to secure the state's election infrastructure, provide election security training to counties and municipalities, provide support to local elections officials, and plan for contingencies.

However, according to outgoing Waukesha County Clerk Kathleen Novack, who was interviewed for a

November 20 article in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, "From my perspective, it would be virtually impossible for any county clerk to do all we need to get ready for an election in that scenario [of adding a March election in 2020]. ... There isn't anyone among the 72 county clerks who thinks it even has a shred of a possibility to be done logistically."

Please share your concerns about the wisdom of holding a third election in Spring 2020 with your representatives in the Wisconsin state Assembly and Senate.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION UPDATE...

Thank you so much if you contacted your State Senator and Assembly Representative about the extraordinary sessions bills. The League had two representatives present through much of yesterday's hearing and Ingrid Rothe, LWVWI Legislative Chair, testified on behalf of LWVWI. We also know League members were present at the Capitol. Whether at the Capitol or contacting your elected officials by phone or email, thanks for adding your voices!

The many calls and emails to legislative offices, along with testimony at the hearing, have made a difference. It appears likely that the proposal to add an additional spring election in 2020 will not move forward. Thanks for contributing to that effort.

There is more to be done! The full Senate and Assembly will vote on many of the bills today. The League continues to oppose the hasty, secretive process used to create these bills. They should be taken up in regular session so that all interested stakeholders can provide input.

Call your legislators and urge them to promote the right to vote by defeating this bill.

One proposal would reduce the hours for "early voting" to a 2-week period prior to the election. Under a court order that struck down a restrictive voting law, municipalities currently have the flexibility to conduct "early voting" for a substantially longer period. The proposal being considered today would reduce the length of the early voting period and allow voting Monday through Saturday only.

The rationale the authors of this

legislation offer is that smaller municipalities do not have the capacity to offer longer in-person absentee voting hours. We support the current system under the court order, which allows clerks to select the hours that best serve their community. We would also support ways to assist small, resource-poor municipalities to provide more opportunities for their residents to vote. However, such solutions are not on the table today.

Find your legislator here: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/>

You can also reach your legislators by calling the Legislative Hotline. In Madison, dial 266-9960. Toll-free, call 1-800-362-9472.

Please consider immediate action as the Senate and Assembly will go into session today. Thank you.

Susan B. Anthony Birthday Celebration!!

The annual Susan B. Anthony Birthday Celebration will be held February 9, 2019 by the League of Women Voters of Beloit and Janesville. Plan to attend!

Event speaker is Eloisa Gómez, co-author of, *Somos Latinas: Voices of Wisconsin Latina Activists*, who will provide an overview presentation highlighting some takeaways on Latina Activists (50 years and older) and their community building efforts in Wisconsin. She will also engage the audience to strategize on relationship- and alliance-building opportunities with the Latinx/Latina communities to further civic engagement.

The Annual Susan B. Anthony Birthday Celebration

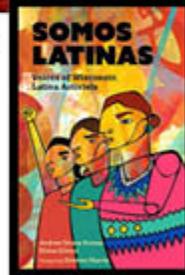
Saturday, February 9, 2019

Boundaries, 3807 S Riverside Dr., Beloit, WI

Beginning at 11:30 a.m. Doors open at 11:00 a.m.



Tickets: \$25 (includes meal and event) Send payment to Deb Fallon, 1232 Elm St., Beloit, WI 53511



Diversity Committee Report

Mary Buelow
Diversity Committee

The second and third sessions of the DVD discussion series *Race - The Power of an Illusion* were held on Saturday October 27 and November 3 at the Hedberg Public Library.

Twelve people attended **The Story We Tell**. This episode uncovered the roots of the race concept in North America, the 19th century science that legitimated it, and how it came to be held so fiercely in the western imagination. The episode is an eye-opening tale of how race served to rationalize, even justify, American social inequalities as “natural.”

Afterwards, attendees discussed the implications of the ongoing, systematic intentional separation of groups from “us” and “others”. In colonial times, the differentiation was between Christians and heathens, not skin color. One person pointed out that those who get lumped in with “Other” is not always what is expected. To Native Americans, all non-Indians are “white” - even African Americans. The idea of “race” developed over time. Once it took hold, racism spawned a lot of bad science. It started with the conclusion that “white people are better”, and tried to find proof.

Attendees also shared how hard it is to like someone who is not-like-me. It can be frightening to realize what actions can be justified when they are committed against “other”, those not-like-me people. There can be extra hubris of the “white person’s” vision of what is important, and how the world works. We all see ourselves and our experience as the baseline, and expect other people should become more like us. As a member of the dominant group, what am I willing to let go, in order to make change?

Sixteen attended **The House We Live In**. This episode asks, If race is not biology, what is it? Race resides not in nature but in politics, economics and culture. Our social institutions “make” race by disproportionately channeling resources, power, status and wealth to white people.

After this episode, attendees discussed the connections between housing and net worth; conditions created by redlining, urban renewal, and specific government policies. Who benefits financially from these policies? Who makes money off of racism? Governments put interstate highways where land was cheap. Land was cheap in racially redlined areas. Even if the original decision was not born of racial intent, neighborhoods of color were disproportionately impacted. This is a system that perpetuates itself and grows without anyone’s further action.

Attendees also discussed contemporary social changes we are seeing. The non-profit world is pushing initiatives to be more inclusive. Members of the 21st century “GenZ” is more diverse than previous generations, giving people from diverse backgrounds opportunities

to share their stories. How much of a difference will this make for America’s future inclusiveness?

For more information:

For those who want to see how hidden and unconscious racial bias plays out in an unexpected ways, here’s an article with one example:

Teaching The Camera To See My Skin: navigating photography’s inherited bias against dark skin, by [Syreeta McFadden](#)

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/syreeta-mcfadden/teaching-the-camera-to-see-my-skin>

For those who want more information about how race impacts housing and net worth, here is suggested reading list:

Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America_ by Richard Rothstein

The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap by [Mehrsa Baradaran](#)

Foreclosed: State of the Dream 2008 http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ufo/legacy_url/500/StateOfDream_01_16_08_Web.pdf?1448058484

A Long History of Affirmative Action - For Whites <http://newsreel.org/guides/race/whiteadv.htm>

When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America by [Ira Katznelson](#)



CALENDAR

Upcoming Activities 2018-19*

*Additional events may be planned. Check website: lwvjvl.org/calendar

December 2018

December 3 No Board Meeting

January 2019

January 7 Board Meeting

January 10 @ 6:30 p.m. Milton City Council
Chambers Al Hulick, Gen-
eral Membership meeting



February 2019

February 4 Board Meeting
February 9 Susan B, Antho-
ny Party

March 2019

March 4 Board Meeting
Spring Election - Candidates Forums

April 2019

April 1 Board Meeting
Spring Elections

May 2019

May 6 Board Meeting
Annual Meeting

LWV Receives NewNew Voter Award



Eileen Newcomer, second from the right, is also a member of our Janesville League.

The work of the state and local Leagues across Wisconsin registering voters from the New American Majority was recognized on Wednesday. NewNew Voter Awards were awarded to groups who coordinated with Wisconsin Voices to turn out new New American Majority voters. The League received the award for registering the most voters of all the Wisconsin Voices Partner Groups. Voter Education Coordinator, Eileen Newcomer, accepted the award on behalf of the League. Thank you to every League member and volunteer who helped register voters, train folks to register voters, and supported registration efforts! This award recognizes your registration work across the state.



Additional Memberships

We would like to introduce our newest members. Please welcome and add them to your directory:

Debbie Johnson

Ruth Robinson

Joellyn Merz

Barbara Callahan

**To contact the League,
please feel free to use
either of these options:
www.lwvjvl.org or**



**P.O. Box 8064
Janesville, WI
53547-8064**

Are you reading this newsletter as a 'guest'?
Joining the League of Women Voters is easy simply fill in this form and mail.

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Individual \$65.00
 Student \$30.00

Household \$95.00

I am unable to join the League at this time but enclosed is a contribution of \$_____.

Please make your check payable to: League of Women Voters -
Janesville, P.O. Box 8064, Janesville, WI 53547-8064

I request consideration for a LWV scholarship.

Web addresses of National, State and Local Leagues:

To check out the action go to: **LWV-US**

<www.lwv.org>

LWV-WI *<www.lwvwi.org>*

JANESVILLE LEAGUE

<www.lwvjvl.org>