



The VOTER

League of Women Voters - Janesville

www.lwvjvl.org

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Communications from the President



Dear Friends in League,

What an exciting beginning we've had for the 116th US Congress and for the new Wisconsin State Legislature and Administration. The League of

Women Voters is in the thick of it.

US Congress: The LWVUS and the LWVWI encourage League members to participate in grassroots advocacy efforts to support the pro-democracy reforms that have been introduced in Congress as **HR1, the For the People Act.**

The four key elements of HR1 are identified in a blog found on the LWVUS website (<https://www.lwv.org/blog/4-key-elements-hr1>) are:

- Expand voter registration
- Implement fair redistricting
- Outlaw voter purging
- Restore the Voting Rights Act

The bill is even more sweeping than this, including provisions about campaign finance and ethics as well as these on voting and election law.

The League of Women Voters is an active participant in the declarationforamericandemocracy.org coalition. If

you look at the website, you'll see that we are in excellent company. LWVUS encourages us members to visit, call, or write our

congresspeople to share with them the one page "Declaration for American Democracy" (found in this newsletter).

You can reach Congressman Bryan Steil at 202-225-3031, or by visiting his website at: Steil.house.gov

Wisconsin State Legislature: On January 10, the LWVWI, with five other plaintiffs, filed a lawsuit challenging the enforceability of the legislation adopted during the lame-duck "extraordinary session" of the Wisconsin Legislature in December. The lawsuit contends that because the Legislature unconstitutionally convened the December 2018 "extraordinary session," all business conducted during the "extraordinary session" is void and unenforceable. More information is on the LWVWI website.

Last week Rep. Lisa Subeck and Sen. Dave Hansen introduced a statewide advisory referendum to give voters the opportunity to appear on the November 2020 ballot calling for a constitutional amendment to limit election spending. **LWVUS does not currently support a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United.** Therefore, LWVWI and local Leagues cannot support this action for a ballot referendum. However, Leagues can continue to advocate in other ways for better campaign financing, greater transparency and stronger rules regarding money in politics. We know that members may work on this issue outside of their League work and individuals

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★ President

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can certainly continue to do so.

If you are interested in further reading about campaign finance reform, you may want to look at the LWVUS pdf document, “Money in Politics: Developing a Common Understanding of the Issues: A Primer for Engagement of League Members and Fellow Citi-

zens – 2014.” You can download it from the LWVUS website at: <https://www.lwv.org/money-politics/money-politics-developing-common-understanding-issues>

Be sure to check the LWVUS, LWVWI, and LWVJVL websites and Facebook pages (e.g., @JanesvilleLWV) for news and updates.

HELP WANTED:

Looking for creative and historically-minded persons to help plan the celebration of the centennials of these historic events:

Passage the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution by Congress--June 4, 1919

Wisconsin's Ratification of the 19th Amendment—June 10, 1919

Founding of the League of Women Voters—February 14, 1920

Ratification of the 19th Amendment by the 36th state, Tennessee – August 18, 1920

Initial planning is underway.



**Please contact
Linda Reinhardt if you
would like to
assist in any**

aspect of our celebrations such as: research of local history, event planning, coordinating with like-minded groups, fund raising, publicity.

Thanks.

LWVWI Midterm Election Observation Report

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin (LWVWI) and Wisconsin Election Protection have released their Wisconsin Election Protection 2018 Midterm Election Report based on the observations of volunteers who observed polling places across Wisconsin on Election Day in November. Both best practices and examples of practices that could be improved at polling places are emphasized in the report. You can access the full report through the LWVWI website at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jMNNrkeG982rZ5VWE8cpZG0fjInfzFnc/view>

1st Vice President Ethel Himmel to leave Board

Carol Herzig
Editor

It's with great sadness that we announce the resignation of Ethel Himmel from our Board of Directors. Her resignation is immediate. She will be assisting her husband, Bill Wilson, in his run for a seat on the Milton City Council.

“I'm uncertain how involved I will be in his campaign, but in order to follow the League

guidelines that I have always asserted to others, I am resigning from the board, a few months before the end of my term. I think the Janesville League is in good hands under your leadership (and the leadership of the current board...good people!). Go forth and do good work!” wrote Ethel.

We will miss her guidance and leadership. Thank you Ethel for everything you do and have done.

LWVWI Files Lawsuit to Prevent Enforcement of Bills Passed During Unconstitutional “Extraordinary Session” of the Legislature



On Thursday morning, January 10, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, along with two other advocacy groups, Disability Rights Wisconsin and Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, as well as three individual Wisconsin residents, filed a lawsuit in Dane County Circuit Court challenging the enforceability of the legislation adopted during an “extraordinary session” of the Wisconsin Legislature during

December 2018. The lawsuit asks the court to prevent the Wisconsin Election Commission and Governor Tony Evers from enforcing or implementing any of the provisions of the newly enacted laws because the Legislature unconstitutionally convened the “extraordinary session.”

“The people of Wisconsin expect their elected officials to represent their interests transparently, and in a manner that respects the limits of the constitutional authority granted to them,” said Erin Grunze, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin. “We are urgently asking the court to prevent enforcement of the bills passed during the ‘extraordinary session’ to ensure the integrity of and to prevent limitations on voters’ ability to participate in the state’s spring elections.”

Statewide the media covered the filing of the lawsuit in print, on radio, and television. You can read the full press release and official complaint. LWVWI will post updates to the website as information is available.



Save the Date! For the LWVWI 2019 Annual Meeting

together amid so much relevant and influential local history to conduct the League’s business, be inspired, and launch the Centennial celebrations of the League and the passing of the 19th Amendment. Please plan to join us on June 8th!

LWVWI Annual Meeting Registration and Lodging information to be announced soon.

Mark your calendars!

The 2019 LWVWI Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, June 8th, at the scenic Green Lake Conference Center, in south central Wisconsin. We are grateful to have LWV Ripon Area host this year’s annual gathering.

The small town of Ripon, just down the road from the Conference Center, is rich in political history. It’s home to the birthplace of the Republican Party (1854) and the birthplace of Carrie Chapman Catt (b. January 9, 1859). Chapman Catt was a leading voice in the final campaign for women’s suffrage and key founder of the League. We’re very excited about gathering



2019 Spring Elections Are Just Around the Corner

key local officials will be decided by the April election.

Be informed and help spread the word about these important state and local elections!

You can find out the date of your next election by visiting the official election website of the state of Wisconsin - MyVote.wi.gov and searching by your

address.

You may also consider absentee voting by mail to ensure you don't miss an election this year. You don't need to declare a reason to vote absentee by mail in Wisconsin, and many people find it very convenient to be able to vote when it fits best in their schedule. Find out how you can request your ballot.



The 2019 Spring Primary Election is Tuesday, February 19. Many municipalities and school districts will have nonpartisan primary elections to decide candidates for important local races such as mayor, school board, city council, etc.

Then on Tuesday, April 2, the 2019 Spring General Election will be held. Statewide court races (including a seat for the Wisconsin Supreme Court) as well as

Take Action: Support HR1 - For the People Act

HR1 includes comprehensive reforms, like restoring the Voting Rights Act, improving Automatic Voter Registration, creating a public financing system through small donor matching funds, overturning Citizens United, ending partisan gerrymandering, and more! The League's position is that this bill will make our elections fairer and put the power back into the hands of the American people. The League is working to build bipartisan support.

The legislation begins in the House of Representatives and hearings will be scheduled by various committees for input from election experts (the devil is always



in the details). Contact Congressman Steil and tell him you support the intent of the legislation and will be following it's progress through the legislative process.

It is really easy to send an email message to the Congressman by going to <http://steil.house.gov> and following the prompts to Contact.

Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition Voter Survey



Our partners in the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition are collecting information about the voting experiences of voters with disabilities. Voters with disabilities have experienced problems voting, and they need your

help to find out if the voting barriers still exist or have improved. Information from the survey will be shared with local, state and federal election leaders to protect our right to vote.

Take the survey today!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018GoVoterSurvey>

2018 Election Observation Report



Last week, LWVWI and Wisconsin Election Protection released a joint Wisconsin Election Protection: 2018 Midterm Election Report. The report compiles a detailed analysis of the League's observer reports and activities described to Wisconsin Election Protection during the November 6 Election. The reports includes examples of best practices that were observed, areas that need improvement, and recommendations to improve future elections.

"The League trained and placed 278 volunteer

observers in 497 polling sites across the state for the November Election. The LWVWI election observers play an important role in documenting what actually happens on Election Day, so we can see what the voter experience is like in Wisconsin. Their observations are instrumental in making informed recommendations to improve Wisconsin's elections and ensure all eligible voters are able to cast their vote," said Eileen Newcomer, LWVWI's Voter Education Coordinator.

In general, the Election went well in Wisconsin and that is a testament to the excellent election officials running elections across the state. That being

said, there are a few common areas of concern that need some attention like understanding proof of residence and photo ID requirements, ensuring provisional ballots are offered to all registered voters not meeting the photo ID requirement, and ensuring polling places are accessible to all voters.

Thanks to all of the volunteer election observers who make this statewide program possible and contribute to the final report and recommendations.



Connect with LWVWI!

Keep up with LWVWI as we empower voters and defend democracy in Wisconsin. Visit our website. Follow the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Or connect with us by phone (608.256.0827) or email (lwwwisconsin@lwwwi.org). We love to hear from members and friends.

LWVWI Legislative Committee Update



This past week on Tuesday, January 22, the LWVWI Legislative Committee met despite bad weather. Fortunately, most members connected to the meeting by phone. The committee further discussed the legislative priorities for LWVWI and will set them in the next

meeting.

The committee then discussed AB1 at length. The bill, relating to the coverage of individuals with preexisting conditions, has already passed the Assembly but it is unclear whether the Senate will take it up or the Governor will sign it. (Last year the Assembly passed it but the Senate did not take it up.) The LWVWI Legislative Committee voted to register the League interest in AB1 as “Other,” noting that the members are cautious about any bill that focuses narrowly on one aspect of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Without the full protections of ACA, this legislation alone would not ensure premiums that are affordable for all Wisconsin individuals and families.

If you’re interested, you can view LWVWI’s position on AB1 in the context of other organizations who have registered a position from the WI Lobbying Website.

Strong Recusal Rules Needed in Wisconsin

Yesterday in the Wisconsin State Journal, LWVWI Executive Director Erin Grunze and Jay Heck of Common Cause WI, wrote about why voters need to be aware of and demand strong recusal rules for judges. (Jay Heck and Erin Grunze: More voters should demand strong recusal rules for judges, WSJ, Jan 26, 2019) With important judicial races on the ballot this Spring, this is a timely issue which needs voters’ attention.

Wisconsin currently has the 47th weakest recusal rules in the nation. Accountability and transparency by way of stronger recusal rules need to be a priority for the judiciary, and voters need to demand this from the state’s courts. The very integrity of our judges at all levels — from the state Supreme Court to municipal court judges — is on the line.

LWVWI will continue to educate on judicial recusal



leading up to the April 2 Spring General Election and into 2020.

Your Input is Needed!

Centennial Subcommittees Seeking Members



Two of three recently formed Centennial subcommittees are looking for more League members to join them in the planning process. These two subcommittees are working to create memorable messaging and celebratory events

around the League’s 100th Birthday in February 2020 and the passage of the 19th Amendment in August

2020. We’re so fortunate to be holding the baton at the one hundred year mark in the history of the League and women’s suffrage. Please consider joining a LWVWI centennial subcommittee and adding your voice to how the League’s legacy will be remembered and celebrated.

If you would like to serve on one or both of these Centennial subcommittees, please contact Ellen Penwell in the LWVWI Office at lwwisconsin@lwwwi.org or call 608-256-0827. Subcommittee members communicate primarily by email and teleconferencing so you can live at a distance and still actively participate!

CALENDAR

Upcoming Activities 2018-19*

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

February 2019

February 4
Board Meeting
February 9
Susan B, Anthony Party

March 2019

March 4 Board Meeting
Spring Election - Candidates Forums

Spring Elections

May 2019

May 6 Board Meeting
Annual Meeting



Celebrate your Birthday with the League!

Remember you may still contribute to the State League with a birthday donation and half of your donation will be returned to our Janesville League.



The 2018-19 Board of the League of Women Voters of Janesville

President	Linda Reinhardt	2017-19
First VP		
Second VP		
Secretary	Heide Keith	2017-19
Treasurer	Nancy Sonntag	2018-20
Director	Evon Mitchell	2018-20
Director	Laura Boettcher	2018-20
Director	Carol Herzig	2017-19
Director	Mary Buelow	2017-19

Annual Board Appointed Directors:

Director	Nancy Stabb
Director	Christina Barrett
Director	Jennifer Bleak
Director	Sue Scott

Board Meetings are the 1st Monday of the Month and are open to our membership.

Community Film Discussion

Race - The Power of an Illusion

Basics Cooperative Community Room

Film viewing: 10:00-11:00
Discussion: 11:00-12:00



The Difference Between Us ... Saturday March 9, 2019

Episode 1 surveys the scientific findings - including genetics - that suggest that the concept of race has no biological basis.

The Story We Tell.....Saturday April 13, 2019

Episode 2 provides the historical context for race in North America, including when and how the idea got started and why it took such a hold over our minds.

The House We Live In..... Saturday May 11, 2019

Episode 3 spotlights how our social institutions “make” race by providing different groups vastly different life chances even today.



Janesville League of Women Voters
Questions? contact Mary Buelow at buelow_m@msn.com

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>