

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Calendar of Events

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| 04/20 | Earth Day Celebration |
| 05/02 | Board Meeting |
| 05/18 | Annual MCLWV Meeting |

President's Corner



Anita, Cathy, Angela, and Julie have worked very hard to have our first in-person annual meeting in three years this coming May 18th at the Holiday inn in Manitowoc. The committees will submit written reports ahead of time so that our meeting can be filled with less business and more fun (although of course business is always fun). One business item is our vote on the Land Acknowledgement Statement put together by the DEI committee. We will also hold votes on electing board members. And we will be voting on various policies, but they will be sent to you ahead of time for your review. There will be surprise entertainment and recognitions. We hope you can all join us for a fun night of laughter and celebration.

The state LWV annual meeting will be in La Crosse on June 9 and 10. Our League can send three voting members, but anyone can attend. The theme is *The Currents That Connect Us*. Please note the deadlines for registration for the meeting and for hotel accommodations. (The email with information was sent on 4/1. The meeting registration deadline is 5/17.) We can donate a basket for the silent auction that highlights the importance of water in our region. Anyone interested in contributing, either the basket or the contents, please let Linda or Maureen know. Also let us know if you plan on attending and we can form a carpool. We plan on having a table with information about our Mental Health Committee and the Observer Corps.

NAMI has been very busy, planning Crisis Intervention Training with law enforcement, and working on the pilot project for a Mental Health Court. The Mental Health Committee is collaborating with them on this pilot. Darlene and Marilyn have once again done a superlative job with the Great Decisions programs. The last one was Monday, March 27th. We continue to have very high turnout, both in person and online. It is a source of pride in our community.

We heard from Debra Cronmiller, LWVWI Executive Director, that voter turnout on Tuesday was at an all time high. Almost 40% of our citizens voted. That's in no small part to the Leagues' campaigns, and Cathy Cole's efforts as she encouraged people to vote, to register to vote, and organized candidate forums. Please thank Linda Gratz and the Observer Corps Committee members Sue Matczynski, Mary Wallace, Darian Kaderabek, Jo Ellen Gramling, Nancy Slattery, and Suzanne Zipperer. This is a valuable community service for all now that we don't have a local newspaper to cover our local governmental meetings. Please let me know if you have any questions, suggestions, or information to share.

Thanks so much, Maureen.

April 20: LWV-MC Family Picnic at Woodland Dunes to Celebrate Earth Day 2023

5:00 pm: Coffee at the Center Fireplace and/or visiting the new Center, the outdoor and indoor childrens areas, the Butterfly Garden, the viewing tower, and the Cattail Trail.

6:00 pm: Program — Completing the Circle—Dunes early beginnings were with a Mishicot teacher Winnie Smith encouraging Bernie Bouchard to start a nature center.

A current Woodland Dunes' staff member will give us an update on their conservation efforts, and Jamie _____ from Mishicot High will tell what environmental projects her students are pursuing

7:00 pm: Picnic - Brats and hot dogs will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass. Family members and guests including children are welcome. We will be able to use the facilities inside as well as outside.

Please call Marilyn Sontag at 920-682-8988 if you plan to attend so correct amount of food can be prepared.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

We have a new member to our League and that is Corinne L. Weis of Two Rivers, Wisconsin. We look forward to seeing Corinne at our April 20th Arbor Day celebration and at our Annual Meeting. Welcome to our League.

ANNUAL MEETING

After three years of dealing with COVID, we will be having the Annual Meeting. It will be held on Thursday, May 18th at the Holiday Inn located at 4601 Calumet Avenue in Manitowoc. We will start with registration and cocktails at 5:00 pm, dinner will be served at 5:30 pm. The League members are invited to bring guests. The invitation will go out sometime next week. There will be a choice of entrees and a return envelope will be included. All checks are to be out to the LWV-Manitowoc County. We hope everyone will put this on their calendar and come that evening to enjoy the entire event.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

According to our bylaws, we need to publish the following slate twice. If there is anyone who would like to serve on the board, NOW, is the time so that your name could be included on our final slate by May 12th. The following members have agreed to serve in the following positions.

OFFICERS: Co-Presidents: Linda Gratz and Maureen Crowley (2022-2024)
*Secretary: Julie Grinde (2023-2025)
Treasurer: Jo Ellen Gramling (2023-2025)

*Since we have Co-Presidents, there is no need for a Vice-President, but we will re-elect a Secretary.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Currently serving 2022-2024)

Jennifer Balma

Catherine L. Cole

Nancy Slattery

DIRECTORS WHO0 NEED TO BE ELECTED FOR 2023-2025

Mary Wallace

Marilyn Sontag

Rhea Bradley

APPOINTED DIRECTORS (2023-2024)

Darlene Wellner

Angela Zar

If you are considering a board position, responsibilities would be to attend a monthly board meeting that begins at 5 pm at the Presbyterian Church on 8th Street in Manitowoc and runs for about an hour and half. Please contact Ginny Finnel at (920) 860-9346.

During COVID, we had to think outside the box and the board approved a final printing and voting of all selected items. This proved to be so effective that the board has decided that we will have a final voting before we have our meeting. This will eliminate some of our business meeting so that we can sit back and simply enjoy the evening.

These items will be voted upon before the May 20th meeting that is recommended by the LWV-WI.

The following is for the newsletter and Annual Meeting booklet. This is some background as to what **DEI** is and why we need a **Land Acknowledgement statement**.

WHAT IS DEI?

LWVMC is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in principle and in practice. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's

current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Our board has approved the following statement that will be approved by the general membership at our 2023 Annual Meeting.

We acknowledge that we reside on traditional Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Ojibwe(Chippewa) Ottawa, and Potawatomi homelands along the west shore of Michigami, North America's largest system of freshwater lakes, and the Manitowoc, Mishicot and Neshota Rivers. This is now what we call Manitowoc County. We recognize these peoples' past history and continue to honor their connection to these ancestral grounds.

Truth and acknowledgement are critical to building mutual respect and connections across all generations. We welcome opportunities to advocate for the continued connection between Indigenous nations and their tribal lands. Please take a moment to honor their ancestral grounds and to celebrate the unwavering resilience and tenacity of the Indigenous peoples still here and throughout the world.

Non-Partisan Policy

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County may take action on local governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

The Board of Directors is responsible for carrying out the League nonpartisan political activity/conflict of interest policy in its community, keeping in mind that everything the League does should be measured against the yardstick of nonpartisanship.

While the League encourages its members to be active politically, we specifically prohibit the President and Voter Service Chair from:

Running for/or holding elective office, and

participating in political campaigns including fund raising, contributing financially, chairing campaign events, working for, endorsing or

contributing in any significant way to a campaign for a political candidate or political party.

(Article II – Purpose and Policy: Sec. 2, Policy)

LOCAL STUDY ON POVERTY IN MANITOWOC COUNTY

At the Annual Meeting in 2015, the League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County voted to begin a study of poverty and its impact on families in our county. Committees established then researched poverty and its relationship to four factors: Economic, Food, Shelter and Health. Each committee put aside their committee work to join the Health Committee when they recognized the scope of the drug crises facing our county. This committee completed an extensive report “Poverty and Addiction in Manitowoc County” about the effects of substance abuse on low income households. The report was released in October, 2018 and the League advocated for a number of support positions covering human services needed, criminal justice issues, public schools needs and government responsibilities.

The next concern of the study was to focus on Housing in our county. This committee met a few times before Covid forced the committee to abandon meeting and continue any additional study. Since then a Housing committee has not been formed and no one has been able to step forward to chair a committee. The lack of adequate and affordable housing is a constant need in the community.

At this time the Board of Directors recommends the membership vote to **DROP** the poverty study adopted in 2015. Members will be asked to support this recommendation. The members present at the Annual Meeting can vote to **DROP or RETAIN the local study**. If this is the members’ choice to **RETAIN** or continue the study, **people will need to volunteer that evening in order to begin committee efforts**.

Other items that members will need to vote are: BUDGET, MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING – 2022; CONTINUED SUPPORT OF LWV-MC LOCAL PROGRAMS. Budget will be a separate e-mail since I cannot make a copy of it. However, the Minutes and the LWV-MC Local Programs are listed below.
PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS NEWSLETTER!!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY ANNUAL MEETING – May, 2022

League members were unable to have a traditional in-person Annual Meeting due to COVID-19. Members got the Business Meeting information and ballot through their email or the postal service. Members were asked to vote on 3 items: Proposed 2022-2023 Budget, Report of the Nominating Committee, and Local Program with a recommendation to continue the Poverty Study with a focus on Housing in Manitowoc County. Our Local Program consists of support statements for all of our local studies dating back to 1969. **Our League has 64 members and 40 responded Yes to all of the agenda items with no one voting No.**

BUDGET

The proposed Budget is based on local dues of individual (\$55) and Household (\$80) providing an income of \$3150, Member Contributions of \$1000 and grant income of \$50. There was a transfer from savings of \$1575 bringing the total of **Income to \$5611.00.**

Major expenses included \$1760 (LWVUS) and \$1650 (LWVWI) to pay our dues to national and state leagues. (Dues for both of these levels of league total \$62.00 per member) Other major expenses include \$350 for speakers, \$300 for Great Decisions, \$400 for web site maintenance, and \$275 for room rental/zoom. The total **Expenses were \$5611.00.**

The Proposed Budget for July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023 was accepted by all who voted.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| <u>Officers:</u> | Co-Presidents: | Linda Gratz and Maureen Crowley (2022-2024) |
| | Vice-President: | Vacant |
| | Treasurer: | Jo Ellen Gramling (2022-2024) |

Elected Directors: (2022-2024)

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jennifer Balma | Catherine L. Cole | Nancy Slattery | Sue Matczynski |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|

Appointed Directors: (2022-2023)

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Darlene Wellner | Donna Firman |
|-----------------|--------------|

The Report of the Nominating Committee was accepted by all who voted.

(Current officers 2021-2023 include Secretary: Julie Grinde. Current Directors 2021-2023 include Mary Wallace, Marilyn Sontag and Anita Rappe.)

LOCAL PROGRAM:

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County supports two major goals through our Local Program. One goal is to provide Voter Service information to people regarding how and where to vote and how to participate in the election process. League also sponsors non-

partisan candidate forums for the community. A second focus is to sponsor public information programs on issues of concern to League and the community.

Another part of Local Program includes Support Positions for local studies the league has done in the community since 1969. Each of the 18 Support Positions is related to a local study or issue. These have included day care, school lunch, drug treatment court, mental health issues and poverty in Manitowoc County.

The Board recommends that league continue to support our Local Study - "Poverty in Our Midst: How It Affects Families in Manitowoc County and Our Community" with an emphasis on housing in Manitowoc County.

The Local Program was accepted by all who voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Grinde, Secretary

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY LOCAL PROGRAM

Provide Voter Service Information to citizens

Provide Public Information Programs on issues of concern to League and the community

SUPPORT FOR THESE LOCAL PROGRAM POSITIONS

COUNTY GOVERNMENT: Support initiatives to maintain strong county government responsive to citizens. (1970's)

MANITOWOC COUNTY JAIL: Support for adequate jail staff and rehabilitative programs.(1972)

DAY CARE: Support for adequate Day Care services in Manitowoc County with an emphasis on meeting the needs of low-income families. (1969)

DRUG TREATMENT COURT: Support for a Drug Treatment Court for Manitowoc County. (2008)

INTERSTATE 43: Land is finite and we support that the conservation and the use of land should be a priority in the construction of highways. (1975)

JAIL ALTERNATIVES: Support for the development of jail alternatives designed to reduce costly jailing for minor offenses. Alternatives should be designed to change offender behavior. (1989)

MENTAL HEALTH COURT: Support and advocacy for adding a Mental Health Court in Manitowoc County.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND RESOURCES: Support for access to adequate mental health services for the citizens of Manitowoc County. (1975, 2013)

MUNICIPAL COURT: Support for a Municipal Court for the City of Manitowoc. (1978)

NUCLEAR ENERGY: Support for the education of citizens and government officials about the safe transportation, storage and disposal of radioactive waste and emergency response planning. (1977)

POVERTY AND ADDICTION IN MANITOWOC COUNTY: Support for access for all people in Manitowoc County, regardless of age or income, to adequate substance use disorder services in the prevention of addiction and support for treatment and recovery that includes securing employment and housing. (2019)

SCHOOL LUNCH: Support for a school lunch and breakfast program for the Manitowoc Public School District. (1971)

SCHOOL TRUANCY: Support for truancy reduction programs for students in school in Manitowoc County. (2002)

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: Support for county-wide recycling. (1972)

CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THESE POSITIONS BASED ON POSITIONS OF THE LWVUS AND LWVWI

SEX EQUITY: Support for sex equity in educational and extra-curricular programs to guarantee accessibility and opportunity for young women attending county schools. (1976)

DENTAL CARE: Support for access to dental health care services for low-income residents in Manitowoc County.

POWER PLANT SITING: Support for considering environmental and health concerns when choosing sites and technology. (1980, 1991)

HOUSING: Support for fair housing for citizens of the city of Manitowoc. (1965)

