

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER**

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Calendar of Events

03/08	GD: Struggles Over the Melting Arctic
03/15	GD: The Korean Peninsula
03/18	Candidates Forum
03/22	GD: The Global Supply Chain & Nat'l. Security
03/23	Mayoral Candidate Forum
04/06	Election Day: 7:00 AM TO 8:00 PM

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Dear League Members:

There is a promise of spring in the air and that will help the disposition of many to be a little more optimistic as to getting back to a somewhat “normal” life as we knew it to be.

The vaccination for COVID 19 is reaching out to many league members, family, and friends. Some of you have all ready received the second dose which is a blessing. More people, such as teachers and other essential workers will also be given the vaccine. However, we are not out of the woods as yet. Keep wearing your mask, wash your hands, and practice safe distancing.

The Board is meeting through ZOOM and we are trying to present safe events for all.

Have a wonderful Easter.

Cathy

GREAT DECISIONS:

There are only three more presentations left. We hope all are enjoying them. Remember you can ask questions at the end of each program. To view the Great

Decisions presentations go to: facebook.com/manitowoclibrary or YouTube channel.

03/08: Struggles Over the Melting Arctic: Elizabeth Wheat (UW/GB)

03/15: The Korean Peninsula: David Fields (UW/Madison)

03/22: The Global Supply Chains & National Security: Amulya Gurta (UW/GB)

CANDIDATES FORUM

There will be a Candidates forum on **March 18th from 6 to 8 pm** for mayor and common council sponsored by The Citizens Advisory Committee. It will have a set of questions for the participating candidates and if time will take questions from the audience. The forum will be online only and available live via Facebook on the City of Manitowoc Page, on the City of Manitowoc website, on **ZOOM (ID is 875 8904 8754; Passcode is 9680029 and Xfinity channel 4)**. A recorded version of the forum will be available on the city's YouTube channel the day after the forum.

WOMT will have a mayoral debate on March 23rd between Mayor Nickels and Chris Able at 1 pm. For further information, please contact the WOMT website.

OBSERVOR CORPS: MARCH UPDATE: Linda Gratz, Chair

On behalf of the Observer Corps, I would like to thank our committee members for their hard work during the past year: Sue Matczynski, Mary Wallace , Ceil Held, Erica Strauss, Christine Aguilar, and Nancy Slattery. They have been faithful reporters and have helped keep our members up to date on what is happening in local government. This has been a time-consuming endeavor for all of them who watch and record governmental meetings. Sometimes people have other things happen in their lives that make it hard to keep up. We have recently lost two of our valued reporting members because of personal and family commitments . This means **we are looking for additional volunteers to observe and report. If you would like to volunteer to observe our government in action please contact me at llgratz47@gmail.com or call me at 682-8373.**

I would also like to thank all of you who have been responding positively to the reports. It helps to know that people are reading and learning from this new

project. Also, a big thanks to Cathy Cole who sends these reports out to our members each month.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE UPDATES: Bev Rawlings, Chair

Fire Drill Fridays-Rally/Speaker/March Meets Every Friday @ 1 PM.
Watch live at Fire Drill Friday or Facebook www.firedrillfridays.com/events/

Fire Drill Fridays is a political and environment group based in Washington DC. It was organized by Jane Fonda after she was inspired by the youth groups who are marching for Climate Action.

The purpose of the group is to educate ourselves and to mobilize our government officials to tackle the crisis of climate change, inequality, and structural racism. Each **Friday** has a different focus as it relates to climate.

Jane brings together scientists, movement leaders, experts, activists, Indigenous leaders, community members, and youth. Past topics have been the new administrations Climate Action Plan and HR1 "The People Act" a reform package that will get money out of politics and protect elections and voting rights.

Watch live every Friday at 1 PM at Fire Drill Friday on Facebook or www.firedrillfridays.com/events/

Environment Action for Spring: "Ban The Ban"

Wisconsin Assembly's leader Katrina Shankland will be introducing a bill regarding local control over the use of one time use containers. Currently there is a law in place that does not allow local governments to ban any of these containers that end up in our landfills. We can help support this effort by calling our representatives to co-sponsor the bill. More information about the bill will be available sometime in March.

ELECTION DAY – APRIL 6, 2021

Citizens can request their absentee ballots immediately by calling city clerks.

Early voting will begin March 23rd. For information on your ballots, go to myvote.wi.gov. For information on the candidates, go to Vote411.wi.gov.

MCLWV ELECTIONS, 2021-2022

This is the time of year when we present next year's budget, slate of officers and board members, and changes to by-laws. The budget is attached for those receiving hard copies. It will be sent by e-mail separately. The following slate of officers to be elected are for 2021-23 are: Vice President ?, Secretary – Julie Grinde.

The Board of Directors for 2021-23 are: Mary Wallace and Marilyn Sontag. The 2020-22 officers and Board of Directors are: Co-Presidents: Nancy Slattery and Cathy Cole. Treasurer: JoEllen Gramling. Board of Directors: Jennifer Balma, Maureen Crowley, Linda Gratz, Sue Matczynski, and Bev Rawling.

Two members of the League resigned this year due to family obligations. We are looking for members who wish to serve on the board. We meet once a month through ZOOM, but have met at the Presbyterian Church in Manitowoc under normal conditions. If you have any questions, interests, or concerns, please contact Cathy Cole: clcole3816@gmail.com or (920) 553-8757 or any other officer or board member.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is honoring members who have been in league 50+ years and asking them to share their league experiences. As I was looking through our newsletters and minutes, I realized many of our current members are not aware of this league's impact in our community and how our league is connected to LWVUS and LWVWI. I thought I would give you short history notes on some of the issues we have studied and changes that occurred in our community because of the hard work and concern of our league members who still work on some of these issues today. (Additional information on these history notes can be found in the "Local Program Handbook" provided with your membership.)

Thank you to Darlene Wellner and Marilyn Sontag for their additions to the following notes.

A HISTORY NOTE FOR YOU.... About Day Care Position

In the 1960's a group of citizens who worked closely with children and families many of whom were in poverty, were concerned about the lack of day care services in Manitowoc County. This led to the Manitowoc LWV adopting a study on day care needs in our county resulting in our current position in support of "adequate day care services in Manitowoc County with a special emphasis on serving the needs of low-income children." League members were involved in establishing the Manitowoc County Day Care Association and by 1977 a day care center was opened in Two Rivers and two in Manitowoc. The study was written by Darlene Wellner, Lois Karn and Esther Wellner.

Since the 1970's the League of Women Voters of the United States has supported comprehensive child care services to prevent and reduce poverty and has lobbied for specific programs and legislation. They re-affirmed that position in 1989 under the "Meeting Basic Human Needs" national position.

A HISTORY NOTE FOR YOU....About County Government

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has been interested in strong county governments and in 1959 adopted a state study on County Government. The study was completed in 1961 and the LWVWI adopted positions in favor of smaller county boards, filling administrative officials by appointment and filling policy making officials by election. They concluded that strengthening of county government would occur with a county executive or administrator to head county government to deal with administrative responsibilities currently handled by the County Board Chairperson. The executive or administrator would provide the equivalent of a mayor or city manager in city government.

The state legislature defined the difference between a county executive (elected for a four year term with veto powers over county board decisions) and a county administrator (appointed with no veto power). The LWVWI encouraged local leagues to lobby for one or the other based on which was appropriate for their county.

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County advocated for a County Executive to head county government. The board failed to act. The League

conducted a successful petition drive which required signatures of 5,000 county citizens to enable the issue to be placed as a referendum on the ballot in 1969. It was soundly defeated by the voters and League efforts to get this passed were delayed for a decade.

In 1990 the League sponsored a meeting at the Capital Civic Center to discuss changes in county government which included the possibility of reducing the size of the Manitowoc County Board and whether a need existed for an executive or administrator and the pros and cons of each. Over 400 people attended. Our league supported a size of 15 county board supervisors. After that meeting, the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution to decrease their size from 30 to 24.

At that time our league supported an Administrator given the evidence that some administrative head of county government was necessary due to the growing complexity and size of Manitowoc County government. This fact was increasingly recognized by the members of the county board and county citizens as well. In that same year the County Board created the position of Administrative Coordinator and after a series of people in that position the board created the position of County Executive which had to be decided by a referendum.

In 2000 a referendum passed to create the elected position of County Executive for Manitowoc County. Our League supported the referendum and Dan Fischer served as the first County Executive followed by Robert Ziegelbauer.

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County continues to support initiatives to maintain strong county government responsive to county citizens.

