

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY

## MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**05/18      Annual Banquet and Meeting**  
**06/9-10    State Convention at La Crosse**

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### President's Corner



Not much to report this month, but we do want to encourage everyone to respond to Cathy Cole's invitation to our annual meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup>. As we said last month, Anita, Angela, Cathy, and Julie have worked very hard to have our first in-person annual meeting in three years at the Holiday inn in Manitowoc. There will be surprise entertainment and recognitions to honor members who have done outstanding work for our League. We hope you can all join us for a fun night of laughter and celebration.

A reminder again that the state LWV annual meeting will be in La Crosse on June 9 and 10 and 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 plan on having a table with information about our Mental Health Committee and the Observer Corps.

We just got the numbers for the Great Decisions program from Tim Gadzinski at the library and they are very impressive. The total numbers, including both in-person and virtual attendance ranged from 124 to 276. Congratulations again to Darlene and Marilyn who continue to do a fabulous job.

Please let me know if you have any questions, suggestions, or information to share.

Thanks so much,

Maureen and Linda

## MAY BANQUET AND MEETING

After three years of dealing with COVID, we will be having the Annual Banquet and Meeting. It will be held on **Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 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 has been sent out to all. There is a choice of three entrees and a return envelope is included. All checks are to be made out to the LWV-Manitowoc County. Since I need to give an exact count of dinners before the banquet, this amount is **non-refundable**.

To date I have received about 25 responses to the dinner. Please consider coming to this event to be with members that we have not seen in some time and new members that have recently joined our league.

If there are any questions, please call Cathy Cole at (920) 553-8757 before **Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**.

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## MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MEETING:

During COVID, we had to think outside of the box by voting through ballots through e-mail which proved to be very successful. In the three years that we conducted our annual meetings, we had a response level of over 50% from our members. Since this was so successful, the board thought that we could do part of our business through a ballot. We still need to have an open discussion on the **Land Acknowledgement Statement** and continuation of the **Poverty Study**. So I am asking **ALL MEMBERS to read and vote on the following material. All ballots must be returned by FRIDAY, MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**.

**Thank you so very much for your participation and cooperation.** Any questions, please contact Cathy Cole at (920) 553-8757.

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The following items can be voted upon through the attached ballot.

The budget will be forwarded to all of you on a separate e-mail following the Newsletter. Please take a look and vote on these items.

## **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:**

<b>Officers:</b>	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
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### **Appointed Directors: (2022-2023)**

Darlene Wellner	Donna Firman
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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.)

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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

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According to our bylaws, we need to publish the following slate. 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 12<sup>th</sup>. 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 WHO 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 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Manitowoc and runs for about an hour and half. Please contact Ginny Finnel at (920) 860-9346.

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**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**

**COUNTY SUPPORT FOR THESE LOCAL PROGRAM POSITIONS**

**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)

**CURRENT LOCAL STUDY** -- “Poverty in Our Midst: How it Affects Families in Manitowoc County and our Community” -- **HOUSING:** At this time, the Members of the LWVMC will be asked to **DROP or RETAIN** this program.

**These items will be voted upon before the May 18th meeting that is recommended by the LWV-WI and at the National Level.** The State and National levels decided that the nonpartisan and DEI positions should be acknowledged every year.

- 1) The league is strictly nonpartisan; it neither supports nor opposes candidates for office at any level of government. It, however, DOES work to influence policy by educating its members, as well as the public. One of the ways the Manitowoc County League does this is through candidate forums, where all candidates are invited to participate and present their views, as well as address concerns and answer questions from the public.
- 2) The LWV of Manitowoc County 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.

The following items are to be discussed and put to a vote at the annual meeting are:

### **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.

### **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 out 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.**

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## **EARTH DAY FAMILY PICNIC**

A special thank you goes to Marilyn Sontag and her committee for scheduling Earth Day at Woodland Dunes. We had approximately 28 members attending this outing. Jim Knickelbine and Nancy Nabak, Woodland Dunes staff, were on hand to point out the energy efficient incentives that were implemented in the building of the new addition. Teachers from the Mishicot School District presented their programs that promote ecology awareness to the students. The setting, the food, and the information were top notch!!



