

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

05/16 ANNUAL MEETING
05/31/06/01 STATE WI ANNUAL MEETING

Dear League Members,

Spring has finally come to Wisconsin!! It is so nice to see the flowers and buds on the trees. It is also the time when we end our fiscal year and take time to celebrate what we have accomplished during the year.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the 2023-2024 annual meeting that will be held at the Holiday Inn at 4601 Calumet Avenue in Manitowoc on Thursday, May 16th. It will be Buffet style with chicken teriyaki and pork tenderloin as the main entrée with many sides.

We have Lori Fure as our guest speaker. She has 30 years experience with the Manitowoc County Human Services Department.

As we have done in the past since COVID, we will be voting early on Officers, Board of Directors, minutes of the last Annual meeting, the proposed budget, and local programs. This will cut down our business meeting at the end of our speaker. We want all of you to stick around for this brief, but important meeting.

Also, I wish to thank this amazing Board of Directors and Officers for the time and energy that they have put in this to make it so successful!!

Enjoy the summer!!

Cathy

ANNUAL MEETING

As we have done since COVID, I have attached our budget, minutes of the Annual Meeting, local programs and the slate of officers and directors that need to have a vote before the annual meeting. This cuts down on the actual business meeting. Please send your vote to me as soon as possible. Thank you.

The buffet is \$25.00 per person and will be held at the Holiday Inn in Manitowoc. We will be awarding the Democracy in Action Award to the Lincoln High Student Senate Committee for sponsoring a forum for Candidates running for the Manitowoc Public School District school board. I had to have this money in the by May 10th. The following items need to be voted upon by Tuesday, May 14th. This helps to complete some business before we have the Annual Meeting. Please respond as soon as possible.

The ballot with all items is attached, along with the budget for your convenience.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY ANNUAL MEETING – May 18, 2023

The Annual Meeting was held at the Holiday Inn and was the first in-person annual meeting since COVID three years ago. There were 38 members and guests for dinner. Special guests included Tim Gadzinski and Kathie Fishbeck who received the Great Decisions Advocate Award. The Manitowoc Public Library, the League and several other community groups have sponsored the Great Decisions Program for 15 years. Kathie has been contacting speakers for each of the 8 topics for many years. Tim has used his technology background to make sure people can view these programs from the library Facebook page or by using other social media sources. This was especially important during the years programs were only available virtually due to COVID.

After dinner the video made by Darlene Wellner, Julie Grinde and Marilyn Sontag was shown. Leagues in the state were invited to interview members who had belonged to league 50 years about how league had influenced their lives and the importance of league in their community.

The Business Meeting was called to order at 8 pm by Co-President Linda Gratz. Julie Grinde explained the Annual Meeting Booklet which included information that members had voted on prior to this meeting. It included a Calendar of Events of what league had accomplished while COVID limited our in-person meetings. Finally, it included a list of League Presidents since 1939.

Cathy Cole reported that we have 64 members and 35 responded to Voting on line or through the mail. This continues to be a process that involves more of our members each year. **The Annual Meeting Minutes of 2022 were accepted by all who voted.**

BUDGET:

The proposed Budget is based on local dues of individual (\$55) and Household (\$80) providing an income from Dues of \$3280, Member contributions of \$1500, and grant income of \$50. There was a Transfer from savings of \$1506 bringing the total of Income to \$6336.00.

Major expenses included \$1856 (LWVUS) and \$1740 (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, \$300 for room rental and \$325 for insurance. Total expenses of \$6336.00

The Proposed Budget for July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 was accepted by all who voted.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Vice-President:

Secretary: Julie Grinde (2023-2025)

ELECTED DIRECTORS: (2023-2025)

Mary Wallace Marilyn Sontag Rhea Bradley

APPOINTED DIRECTORS: (2023-2024)

Darlene Wellner Angela Zar

Submitted by the Nominating Committee: Darlene Wellner, Ginny Finnel, Suzanne Zipperer

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

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Continuing Officers:

Co-Presidents: Maureen Crowley/Linda Gratz (2022-2024)

Treasurer: Jo Ellen Gramling (2022-2024)

Continuing Elected Directors: (2022-2024)

Nancy Slattery Cathy Cole Jennifer Balma

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 goal 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 Local Program was accepted by all who voted.

Thank you, Cathy, for managing this part of our Business Meeting through e-mail and US mail. It enables more of our members to participate in the voting process.

Linda invited anyone who wanted to be appointed to the Board contact her.

Committee Recognition:

Marilyn Sontag and Darlene Wellner thanked Kathie and Tim for their work with the Great Decisions Programs. Their contributions continue to make this program a valuable educational opportunity for our community.

Linda Gratz reported the Observer Corp has been issuing their reports for three years. She has a wonderful committee (Mary Wallace, Nancy Slattery, Sue Matczynski, Suzanne Zipperer, JoEllen Gramling, Christina Aguilar, Darian Kaderabek) and thanked them for the time and effort they contribute to the Observer Corp. League members appreciate the committee work and look forward to the reports regarding business at school boards, city councils and county committees.

Jennifer thanked Angela Zar for her help with the DEI statement which was approved in 2022.

Mary thanked the members of the Mental Health Committee that continues to work on establishing a Mental Health Court. This committee has been functioning for about 13 years and has been working on mental health issues that face this community. The committee includes Mary Wallace and Linda Gratz (Co-Chairs), Donna Firman, Linda Luedtke, Martha Rasmus, Susan Lind, Marilyn Sontag, Arah Schmidt, Nancy Slattery, Darlene Wellner, Maureen Crowley and Sue Shaw.

Action Required:

There was a motion and second to approved the Nominating Committee for 2024: Ginny Fimmel (Chairperson), Marilyn Sontag and Jennifer Balma. Motion carried.

Jennifer explained the LWVWI wants all leagues to review their policies at the Annual Meeting each year. The Annual Meeting Booklet has our Non-Partisan Policy, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy and the Land Acknowledgement Statement printed for everyone.

The Land Acknowledgement Statement will be read at any public meetings when appropriate. This appreciation of our history regarding the land we call Manitowoc County is long overdue.

There was a motion from the committee to accept this statement as presented. There was a second. Motion carried. This statement was read at the league meeting in April at Woodland Dunes. The Herald-Times Reporter has printed several extensive newspaper articles on this topic.

Julie explained the Board’s recommendation to DROP the Local study on Poverty.

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 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 needs, Criminal Justice issues, Public School 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 stepped forward to chair a committee. The lack of adequate and affordable housing is a constant need in the community.

There was a motion and second to DROP the local study on Poverty. There was a thoughtful discussion regarding the lack of housing in our community and county. Buildings are substandard and many still have lead paint in the interior. Homelessness is another issue and a Warming Center was established this winter to allow 12 people to spend the night at a local church. Mayor Nichols has completed a study on housing in the community and will be establishing a committee to work on solutions. League members should get on that committee. NAMI has a grant (March-August) to investigate housing and Donna Firman would welcome any league members to be involved.

Motion to DROP the local study carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Grinde, Secretary

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Ginny Finnel, Chair

OFFICERS:

President: Nancy Slattery (2024-2026)

Vice-President: Ginny Finnel (2024-2025)

Treasurer: Annette Kaminsky(2024-2026)

ELECTED DIRECTORS: (2024-2026)

Martha Rasmus Suzanne Zipperer Catherine Leone

Nancy Randolph Cathy Cole Jennifer Balma

Linda Gratz Maureen Crowley

APPOINTED DIRCTORS: (2024-2025)

Darlene Wellner Angela Zar

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: (2024-2025)

Submitted by Nominating Committee: Ginny Finnel, Darlene Wellner, Suzanne Zipperer

CONTINUING OFFICERS:

Secretary: Julie Grinde (2023-2025)

CONTINUING ELECTED DIRECTORS: (2023-2025)

Mary Wallace Marilyn Sontag

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)

STATE CONVENTION will be held in Green Bay, Wisconsin on Saturday, May 31st and June 1st. In person registration deadline is Friday, May 17th. If you wish to attend, go to their website for further information.

GREAT DECISIONS REPORT:

Overall, Great Decisions is still very well attended, with over 100 in attendance in-room and online for every presentation, except for "Understanding Indonesia," which was low. I think that having an unknown speaker presenting exclusively online didn't work in our favor (as well as it being at the end side of the series), though her presentation was rock-solid. I also think that, overall, there's a lot of political fatigue going around. Not necessarily in action or discussion in the real world. Rather, in hearing about troubling situations--locally, domestically, and internationally. There's a lot to process these days and I believe it had a bit of attendance impact.

It was still a fantastic line-up of speakers and topics and another great year!

A big thank you goes to Darlene Wellner, Marilyn Sontag, Kathy Fishbeck, Tim Gadzinski, of the Manitowoc Public Library, and other members of their committee for another great year!!