



President's Message

During the summer hiatus I spent my time getting to know League leaders better and discussing strategy for the coming year. We have many new members, several new committees, and possible changes in program. All of this is both challenging and exciting, as we move forward to reach our goals in an increasingly polarized environment.

The Board and leadership team met on a beautiful Saturday in July for training and goal-setting at the home of LuAnn Bird, where we developed an operating framework for the year. It's always interesting to see how priorities emerge. This year we agreed on two main organizational goals plus an overarching vision.

Two priorities emerged from our group brainstorming process:

- To work on redistricting to re-establish fair voting maps, and
- To encourage and promote responsible journalism, including the protection of our First Amendment right of freedom of the press.

Our vision was to increase our visibility in the community and become the “go-to” organization for people who are looking for guidance on how to reclaim representative government and make democracy work. We hope to keep this vision alive through the coming year in everything we do, not to toot our own horn (although we may have to) but because we have the knowledge, the integrity, and the workforce (all of our amazingly hard-working and committed members) to enable this goal.

We brought these ideas to the calendar-planning meeting the following week and came up with four great general meetings as well as various social events to encourage League engagement. Check out *The Voter*, our website, and social media for details.

Of our new groups, two have scheduled meetings in September. The Waukesha County Group, which is open to all members and potential members who live in Waukesha County, are invited to Leigh Ann Tidey's home on September 25 (see calendar, p. 2) for their first meeting.

The Government Committee, chaired by Erin McCarthy, will hold its first meeting on the same evening from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Bay View Public Library to discuss “Democracy in Our Back Yard.” (See p. 4). Both groups are very welcomed additions to our growing League and I'm excited to feel their energy and enthusiasm as our program year takes off.

We're on a roll!

Anne Golden



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CALENDAR

September 2017			
7	Thurs	9 am 11 am	Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave., Courtroom 390 Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
12	Tues	6 - 7:30 pm	Social Policy Committee Meeting Milwaukee Public Library-Central Branch, Room 2B, 814 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Solana Patterson-Ramos, solanamke@gmail.com
13	Wed	6 pm	Board Meeting 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Anne Golden, 414-559-2632
14	Thurs	10 -11 am	International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group - Policy & Petroleum Wauwatosa Public Library, Firefly Room, 7635 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222
17	Sun		Citizenship / Constitution Day
18	Mon	12 noon	Lunch & Learn Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
18	Mon	1:15 pm	Membership Committee Meeting Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Rasmussen, 414-791-0114
20	Wed	5:30 pm	Kick-Off Salad Supper Lake Park Pavilion Community Room, 3233 E. Newberry Blvd., Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Rasmussen, 414-791-0114
25	Mon	6-8 pm	Waukesha County Group Gathering Leigh Ann Tidey's Home, N8W29363 Keswick Ct., Waukesha Contact: Leigh Ann Tidey, 414-899-3014
25	Mon	6-7 pm	Democracy in Our Back Yard Chat Bay View Public Library, 2566 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Erin McCarthy, 414-467-9840
26	Tues		National Voter Registration Day
27	Wed	6 pm	Natural Resources Committee Meeting Shorewood Village Center, 3930 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood Contact: Carol Diggelman, 414-232-3739

October 2017			
4	Wed	6 pm	General Meeting: Housing in Milwaukee UWM Student Union, Room 191, 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee Contact: Solana Patterson-Ramos, solanamke@gmail.com
5	Thurs	9 am 11 am	Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave., Courtroom 320 Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
8	Sun	2 -4 pm	New Member Orientation Saint John's On The Lake, 1840 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Anne Golden, 414-559-2632
9	Mon		The Voter Newsletter Deadline Submit articles, photographs, notices or other content for potential publication in <i>The Voter</i> Contact: Anne Golden, 414-559-2632
10	Tues	6 - 7:30 pm	Social Policy Committee Meeting Milwaukee Public Library-Central Branch, Room 2B, 814 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Solana Patterson-Ramos, solanamke@gmail.com

October 2017 (Cont.)

11	Wed	6 pm	Board Meeting 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Anne Golden, 414-559-2632
11	Wed	1 pm 6 pm	Unit Meetings: Housing in Milwaukee See lwvmilwaukee.org for details Contact: Solana Patterson-Ramos, solanamke@gmail.com
12	Thurs	10 -11 am	International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group - Latin America Wauwatosa Public Library, Firefly Room, 7635 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222
16	Mon	12 noon	Lunch & Learn Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
16	Mon	1:15 pm	Membership Committee Meeting Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Rasmussen, 414-791-0114
19	Thurs	9 am 11 am 2 pm	Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave., Courtroom 320 Contact: Tom Neubauer, 414-332-8482
24	Tues		United Nations Day
25	Wed	6 pm	Natural Resources Committee Meeting Shorewood Village Center, 3930 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood Contact: Carol Diggelman, 414-232-3739

Becoming Engaged

Chris Weber Spornick, Membership Committee

As an active member of the membership committee, I receive the Interest Survey submitted by Leaguers. I am particularly interested in the ones from new members as I learn of their areas of expertise and how they would like to be involved in League. I am also curious about why they joined LWV. Right up there with wanting to engage citizens in the democratic process, new members want to be part of an organization of women and men who are smart, knowledgeable, action-oriented, and confident in the grassroots political process. Often new members want to develop leadership or administrative skills. All are excellent reasons to join and be active in the League. The Interest Survey is a useful tool for League leaders to know who is interested and how to contact those new members to discuss opportunities for involvement. There is much to be done to make democracy work and every member, new or experienced, is welcome to join in the movement. Please complete the Interest Survey online, whether you are new to the League or have been a member for some time. It will help to facilitate your involvement. Thank you for your contribution with this action.

Also, it is time to pay our annual dues. Our goal is to receive all dues by July 1 of each year. For those who have paid, we are deeply grateful. For those who still need to, we appreciate your continued support.



National Voter Registration Day 9/26/2017



TAKE the CHALLENGE

- Help contact at least one newly eligible voter to get them to register
- Spread the word about Wisconsin's new online Voter Registration System

myvote.wi.gov

Everyone can help!

Take the National Voter Registration Day Challenge September 26, 2017

On September 26, 2017 the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County will be joining other Milwaukee organizations and Leagues throughout Wisconsin and the U.S. for National Voter Registration Day. This year our League is asking all League members to:

TAKE THE CHALLENGE

- **Help Contact a Minimum of One Newly Eligible Voter to Help Them Register to Vote**
- **Spread The Word About Wisconsin's New Online Voter Registration (OVR) System**

EVERYONE CAN HELP!

Contact your family members, neighbors, and co-workers on September 26, 2017:

1. Ask if they have changed their address (even just an apartment number) since the last time they voted. If yes, they need to re-register.
 - a. Tell them to change their address online with the DMV at the DOT address.
 - b. Then tell them to go to www.myvote.wi.gov to re-register.
2. If they have never registered to vote, tell them that voter registration in Wisconsin can now be done online at www.myvote.wi.gov.
 - a. Tell them they will need to have a current and valid Wisconsin ID or Driver License to use the OVR system.
 - b. If they have never received a Wisconsin ID or Driver License, they can go to www.myvote.wi.gov to download a paper registration form that they can complete and return to their local municipal clerk along with an acceptable proof of residence.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU DID ON SEPTEMBER 26 or if you want more information: Email the Voter Services Committee at lwwmc.voterservices@gmail.com.

Democracy in Our Back Yard Erin McCarthy

Words like resistance, action, and protest scream from headlines and social media. As they shout they also overwhelm. The good news is that many Americans are searching for a way to participate in America's democracy. The bad news is that some are growing frustrated. The League's mission is *Making Democracy Work*. Let's bridge the gap between being overwhelmed by politics and feeling connected to democracy in our community. The Government Committee invites you to join us this fall for a series of "Democracy in Our Back Yard" chats. Together we can examine local issues, connect with League positions on the issues, and chart a path forward. Please contact us at gov@lwwmilwaukee.org if you are interested.

League Goes Beyond Book Discussion

Kathy Johnson, VP Program

A small group of League members have met monthly since February, initially for discussion of Matthew Desmond's book, *Evicted*. Over two meetings members explored issues presented by the author, including:

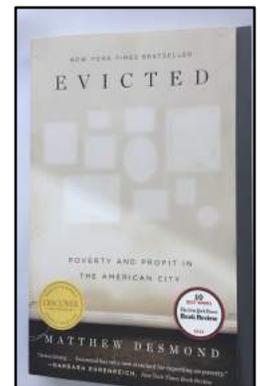
- In the past, there was a sense among tenants that they had rights, but this doesn't seem to be the case now.
- Many people experiencing these problems are descended from working class families but the jobs have left the city. The people left behind are often told that they are the problem.
- It is necessary to work towards realization of housing as a human right.
- The problems are so huge one wonders how to begin working at solutions. Participants discussed the need to become involved in something such as Boys & Girls Clubs, literacy activities, etc.
- Developing trust relationships is essential.
- The statistics cited in the epilog reflect that women with children have higher eviction rates than others. One reason may be that women are forced by regulations to rent more than they can afford so that there are only two occupants per bedroom.
- Another issue is the association of rental housing with problems such as pests and poor upkeep because the landlords tend to be less strict about adhering to regulations.
- Stable housing results in greater dignity and pride but stable incomes and jobs are still needed.

Members concluded that the League can play a role in addressing the issues Desmond explored, but that further education is needed regarding the situation in Milwaukee. To that end, Raphael Ramos, from the Eviction Defense Project, and April Hartman, from Legal Action Wisconsin, were invited to speak to the group. Several committee members are considering the value of attending eviction court to observe the process.

Moving toward action, the committee will research the Milwaukee nuisance ordinance that can result in eviction when calls to the police to report domestic violence situations are misclassified.

The group, as of July being led by Solana Patterson-Ramos, has been meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 PM. Meetings set for September and October will be held at the Central Public Library, room 2B.

If you are interested in moving beyond *Evicted*, taking a deeper look at the issues of eviction and housing in Milwaukee, and moving to action steps, please join us. Feel free to email the Social Policy Committee at sp@lwvmilwaukee.org.



OSHER PROGRAMS

Recognizing the importance of *Evicted*, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Osher Institute of Lifelong Learning has embarked on a Big Read over the fall and spring semesters. Some of the Osher programs on the docket for the fall semester include:

- September 14: **Poverty and Housing**, a panel discussion with Maudwella Kirkendoll, COO of Community Advocates; Donna Rongholt-Migan, Executive Director of Cathedral Center; Willie L. Hines, Jr., Associate Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee.
- September 29: **Eviction Defense Project - Housing Stability in Milwaukee**, a talk by Raphael Ramos from Legal Action of Wisconsin.
- October 2: **Landlord Games Watchdog Update**, a talk by Kevin Crowe and Cary Spivak from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.
- October 9: **Poverty & Housing**, a talk by Brian Sonderman from Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity.

If you are already an Osher member, you should have received your catalog for the fall semester. If you are 50 or over and are not a member of Osher, this is a great opportunity to join and expand your knowledge about an issue of importance in Milwaukee. Visit the Osher website at http://uwm.edu/sce/program_area/osher-lifelong-learning-institute/.

Great Success at Naturalization Ceremonies

Mary Jo McDonald

This summer has been an exciting time at the naturalization ceremonies. We are fully operational with ten computers and a scanner to assist our new citizens in registering to vote. For the months of June and July, a total of 616 received their citizenship papers in eight ceremonies. Of those, we were able to assist 41% of the participants with information to register and 186 new citizens were registered with our help.

The Print Material group has revised the brochure *How to Register and Vote in Wisconsin* to reflect the many changes in voting laws. Gone are the extra stickers and cross-outs that we have needed in the past year. This helpful brochure is distributed to all new citizens as they leave the courtroom. Another handout informs voters who made name changes of the steps they must take with both the Social Security Office and the Department of Motor Vehicles before they can register to vote. We thank Rozanne Screven and her committee. Thanks also to Leigh Ann Tidey and the High School Voter Education group that created a wallet-sized card explaining the online *My Vote* system in both English and Spanish. Our materials are also being shared with all the Leagues in Wisconsin to improve their voter registration drives.



We have many new volunteers at naturalization. In June and July a total of 67 volunteers helped with our work. Grateful thanks to you all. There will be many more opportunities to assist in voter registrations at future naturalizations. Eighteen more ceremonies are scheduled before the end of 2017. Volunteers comment on what an inspiring day it is to see the ceremony and share in congratulating our many new citizens from typically twenty to thirty-five countries. Don't hesitate to join us. For more information, email Mary Jo McDonald at mjom365@gmail.com.

Fall Kickoff Salad Supper Social

Ann Batiza



This year's Fall Kickoff Salad Supper Social sponsored by the Membership Committee will again take place at the Lake Park Pavilion Marcia Coles Community Room in the lower level of Lake Park Bistro at 3133 E. Newberry Boulevard.

All *members* of the LWV-MC are welcome to gather on Wednesday, September 20 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm! Please park in the spots designated for the Park Community Room in the Lake Park Bistro parking lot. Walk around the outside to the right of the Lake Park Bistro,

go down the steps and enter the lower level of the restaurant from the back of the building. (There is also a long ramp with no steps if you wish to enter that way.) This is the Marcia Coles Community Room where we will gather to learn about League activities for the coming year and enjoy each other's company over dinner.

Please bring a salad or dessert to share. If you have questions, contact the League Office at 414-273-8683. We hope to see you there!



An Exciting 2017-2018 Calendar Emerges from Calendar Planning Meeting

Kathy Johnson, VP Program

A group representing League membership, the Board and Committees met on July 12 with a very specific purpose: to assemble the 2017 - 2018 Calendar, including identification of general meetings to be presented in the coming year.

The group decided to schedule four general meetings. This allows for flexibility should an issue arise during the year that must be addressed. For example, LWV-WI plans to conduct a study regarding a livable wage. It is not known when that study will be completed and what follow-up or action the state League will request.

The general meetings for 2017 - 2018 are:

- *Housing in Milwaukee, Evictions, Race Relations and Policy*; Wednesday, October 4 (in the evening).
- *The Impact of Backsliding on Environmental Regulations*; Saturday, November 11.
- *Guns, Grace and Grief*; Saturday, February 17.
- *The Decennial Census in Relation to Fair Voting Maps*; Saturday, April 21.

Assisting with the development of programming for general meetings is an interesting and very satisfying experience. A committee with strong member participation can increase the quality of a presentation and definitely makes the experience more enjoyable. Please consider offering some of your skills and talents to help make our general meeting presentations successful. Send an email to Kathy Johnson, VP Program at vpprogram@lwwmilwaukee.org.

Discussion was broad and open but several major themes arose.

- The issue of polarization needs to be considered and addressed in some manner in all presentations.
- When preparing presentations for the general meetings, we are urged to view our actions through the lens of racial equity: how does this action affect employment, support for employment (housing, child care, transportation, etc.), and education.
- We have multiple audiences for our general meetings, including long-term and newer members at varying levels of participation, as well as potential members. We discussed the need to draw members from all parts of the community, beyond those represented by a majority of current members. Accomplishing that goal may require an openness to changing when and where we hold general meetings.
- There are multiple organizations with which the League can collaborate.

Another topic of lively discussion concerned the need for regular activities that provide opportunities for our members to socialize (in addition to our traditional kick-off supper, souper supper, and holiday celebration). Look for more information in the near future.

We look forward to seeing members new and old at our League activities!



New Members

Shirley Halloran, Membership Committee

James and Deborah Brownlow, Muskego
Megan Hindman and Peter Schnier, Menomonee Falls
Sarah Huck, Milwaukee
Carol Lewensohn, Shorewood
Lisa Paul, Shorewood
Suzanne Poisl, Waukesha
Mary Ellen Spincuzza, Milwaukee

Welcoming new members in each issue of *The Voter* is a pleasure, but this time we think of long-time members, too.

Everyone is invited to a kick-off social on Wednesday evening, September 20, at the Lake Park Pavilion. Continuing members know that it's an excellent opportunity to reconnect with others, but new members are especially invited to be welcomed into the Milwaukee County League.

Then on Sunday afternoon, October 8, new members are encouraged to attend an orientation at Saint John's on the Lake. Though it will include information about League basics, long-time members may find it helpful, too.

You've joined us in membership; now join us as we gather.

Join Up! Join In! Join the League of Women Voters - Today!
Non-partisan, non-profit since 1920!

Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement and leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels.

Website: lwvmilwaukee.org

Email Address: league@lwvmilwaukee.org

Milwaukee County Dues (circle one):

\$70 Individual \$110 Household \$ 25 Student

\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships) \$170 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Financial support available upon request -- call 414-559-2632.

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Work/Cell Phone (____) _____

City _____ WI Zip _____ Email _____

Please complete this form and **mail it** with your check to: League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Suite 102, Milwaukee, WI 53202

OR join online at lwvmilwaukee.org.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

**JOIN UP!
JOIN IN!**



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