

January 2018

League of Women Voters - Whitewater Area

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- Voter Services
- President's Message – Happy New Year 2018!
- State Program Planning for 2018-2019

Calendar of Events

January 20th 10:00am

Lively Issues Discussion
Fairhaven Community Rm
Whitewater, WI

February 15th 7pm

Discussion: Janesville, An
American Story
City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI

March 10th 10am

Candidate Forum for
Common Council

City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI

March 15th 7pm

Fake News & Role of Media
City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI

April 3rd Spring Election

April 19th 7pm

Earth Day & Environmental
Sustainability

City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI



Lively Issues Discussion

Saturday, January 20th, 2018 at 10 AM
Fairhaven Community Room, Whitewater

Hear Ye Hear Ye – members of the Whitewater-Area League are called to attend a meeting of the membership on **Saturday, January 20, 10AM - noon, in Fellowship Hall at Fairhaven Senior Services, 435 W Starin Road, Whitewater, for the purpose of discussing a 2018-19 Program Planning Initiative recommended by the LWV WI State Planning Committee.**

The Committee is asking all local leagues to weigh in on the **“Enhanced Diversity Through Community Alliances” initiative**. If consensus is positive state-wide, the Committee will recommend that the State Board, in turn, recommend that this initiative be approved at the June 2018 LWV WI Annual Meeting as an official State Program for 2018-19.

The initiative is directed toward enhancing diversity within the league by partnering with cultural groups in our area, initially with the Latinx community. The goal is to be of greater assistance to this underserved and rapidly growing group of voting-eligible citizens. Three local leagues are already piloting the initiative in an exploratory fashion. Best practices that emerge can be used in strategically partnering with any cultural group.

The **Lively Issues Meeting** is also reserved for discussion of any recommendations members might have to propose a state study for

May 12th 10am

LWV Annual Membership

**Fairhaven Community Rm
Whitewater, WI**

Contact Us

www.lwvwhitewater.org

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the purpose of updating any current state position. Current state positions can be viewed on the LWV WI website: <https://my.lwv.org/Wisconsin>. Click on "POSITIONS" on the home page (<https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/positions>). And we'd also like to have a brief exchange of ideas on our local league board structure, how we can effectively engage with new members, and strategies for voter registration assistance events for the 2018 election year. If you are new to the League, this is a meeting that will expose you to its grassroots workings. It starts with discussion and leads to consensus to take concerted action toward a goal. Your voice matters! We want to hear from you.

The **discussion will be led by Whitewater-Area League Vice President Ellen Penwell**. She encourages members to bring other issues of interest to the meeting. Time permitting; we'll touch upon all concerns expressed and, at the very least, document those concerns for future conversations. Coffee and light refreshments will be served.

Are You Interested in Working on Voter Services?

The League is perhaps best known for its voter registration services. League members have, since the League's inception in 1920, been vigilant advocates for getting out the vote, protecting the vote, and educating voters so they are able to make their own informed decisions on Election Day.

If our local league's current voter services program is to expand, it will need a core group of dedicated league members working together in committee to plan and propose to the board, strategies for nonpartisan voter registration assistance events in the Whitewater Area community at large, on the UW-Whitewater campus, and in area high schools.

The Committee also needs a chair to call the meetings, oversee and coordinate registration assistance events, and serve either as a member of the board or as a board liaison.

If this sounds like you, please attend the Lively Issues Meeting on January 20th or contact Ellen Penwell at 262-203-6529 or by email, espenwell@gmail.com



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FACEBOOK

Visit Our LWV – Whitewater Area Website and “LIKE” Us On Facebook!

“LIKING” the League’s FACEBOOK will automatically send posts to your feed. Then, we recommend that you not only “Like” the post but “Share Public” as well. This will help us to get our message out to a much broader audience.

President’s Message

Happy New Year!! This comes to wish all of you a wonderful **2018!!** In the League of Women Voters at all levels ~ national, state, and local ~ many exciting changes are on the forefront. And **YOU** are needed to help make this happen.

We celebrate that we have **new members**, and I want to **invite YOU** to bring your interests and skills to work to help make the Whitewater League continue to promote making democracy work in new ways in this area.

The National League is taking time to re-evaluate and re-structure the organization to be more relevant to our current environment. And statewide, efforts are being implemented to increase the diversity of our membership, Board, and services.

We celebrate the **new leadership in the State Office** that includes **Erin Grunze** as the new **Executive Director**, **Ellen Penwell** (Whitewater member) working with **Membership and Events**, and **Eileen Newcomer** as **Voter Services Coordinator**. Wisconsin is one of very few states which have Staff at the State Level, and we are grateful for their leadership and guidance.

Please note major events taking place in the next few months and highlighted elsewhere in this newsletter. **YOU** are invited to join us in attending the **State LWV Annual Meeting** which will be held in **Oshkosh, June 8-9**. It is another great way to become more familiar with the workings of the League. Notify Mary Beth Byrne at wisconsinwoods@gmail.com if you are interested.

We are privileged to have the **League National Convention** being held in **Chicago, IL, June 28 – July 1**. Room reservations have been made, so if you are interested in attending, please email Mary Beth Byrne at wisconsinwoods@gmail.com. This is truly an amazing organization, and you will learn so much about the inner workings of The League!!

Looking forward to seeing you at our **Membership Meeting on January 20 beginning at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall of Fairhaven Senior Services.**

Mary Beth Bryne
President, LWV Whitewater Area

State Program Planning for 2018-2019

In September of 2017, the State League Board launched an initiative designed to establish opportunities to enhance League services to diverse communities and, through this effort, enhance diversity within League membership and leadership.

Members of LWV Beloit, LWV Milwaukee County and LWV Sheboygan are participating at varying levels in the initiative's pilot program. They were asked to concentrate their action plans in the first year on the demographically fast-growing, underserved, and voting-eligible Latinx community as a representative community.

The initiative was introduced in a "Launch Meeting" in September and continued in the October 2017 Issues Briefing, where attending Leagues were asked what they might do to achieve similar objectives in their own communities. The pilot leagues will be working on their goals and activities throughout the 2017-18 League year. Progress reports are due sometime in spring.

The LWV WI State Program Committee is considering whether to recommend to the State Board that it recommend "Enhanced Diversity Through Community Alliances" at the June 2018 LWV WI Annual Meeting as a State Program for 2018-2019.

Please respond to this questionnaire online using the link at the end of this article. Please do so by March 1, 2018. The following questions are on the online form, and they are presented here just to facilitate your discussion.

1. If the State Board were to recommend, for adoption, a program emphasizing strategies for outreach to diverse communities, would your League be supportive of this program?
2. If your League would be interested, what should be the focus of this work in the 2018-19 League year? Check all that apply:
 - a. Build better communications and friendships in the community;
 - b. Provide better service to diverse communities through voter service, issue education or leadership development;
 - c. Enhance membership diversity for League;
 - d. Other _____
3. Leagues participating in the pilot initiative have said they would like the State League to offer resources to help local Leagues enhance outreach to diverse communities. What kind of

resources would your League like to see? Check all that apply:

- a. Spanish-language voter information
- b. Hmong-language voter information
- c. A self-reflection template for assessing your League's current strengths and weaknesses as you enhance your efforts to reach diverse communities
- d. A pass-through grant you can use to pay an expert to lead your board through a self-reflection exercise. (The State Office would have to raise funding in order to make this possible. It will help to know how many Leagues would like to have this resource.)

As we do every year, the State Board invites local Leagues to propose a state study to update any state position. Our state positions are here: <https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/positions>. Keep in mind that Leagues may use any existing state or national LWV position for their advocacy. You can access the national positions from the link above.

If you wish to propose a State Position Update, please include the following in your proposal:

- a) The position that you believe needs updating;
- b) The scope of a statewide study needed to update the position;
- c) The methodology you would recommend for carrying out the study statewide;
- d) Whether your League can provide volunteer leadership to carry out the study.

Again, please respond online at
<https://goo.gl/forms/pxxoglkypCtZ55r82> **by March 1, 2018.**

