

January 2019

League of Women Voters - Whitewater Area

## In This Issue

- Susan B. Anthony Celebration
- Membership Update
- Welcome to 2019
- January Membership Meeting
- Issues Briefing Recap
- Intro to Voto Latino
- Candidate Forum 2019
- Lame Duck Legislation
- February Speaker Introduction

## Calendar of Events

- January 25 10 AM  
Membership Meeting on  
Diversity Initiative: Self  
Reflection
- February 21 6:30 PM  
Fair Voting Maps
- March 9, 10 AM  
Common Council  
Candidate Forum
- March 21, 6:30 PM  
Gun Control
- April 18, 6:30 PM  
Religion & Politics in the  
Age of Trump



### Susan B. Anthony Celebration!!

The annual Susan B. Anthony Celebration will be held February 9, 2019 by the League of Women Voters of Beloit and Janesville. I hope some of you will plan to carpool and attend!

The event speaker is Eloisa Gomez, co-author of *Somos Latinas: Voices of Wisconsin Latina Activists*. She will provide an overview presentation highlighting some takeaways on Latina Activists (50 years and older) and their community building efforts in Wisconsin. She will also engage the audience to strategize on relationship- and alliance-building opportunities with the Latinx/Latina communities to further civic engagement.

### Saturday, February 9, 2019

Boundaries, 3807 S Riverside Dr., Beloit, WI  
Beginning at 11:30 am. Doors open at 11:00 am

### Tickets: \$25

Send payment to Deb Fallon, 1232 Elm St., Beloit, WI 53511

## Contact Us

[www.lwwwhitewater.org](http://www.lwwwhitewater.org)

### Board Members

#### Vice President

Mary Beth Byrne (2017-2018)  
262-473-8723  
[wisconsinwoods@gmail.com](mailto:wisconsinwoods@gmail.com)

#### Secretary

Ellen S. Penwell (2016-2018)  
262-203-6529  
[espenwell@gmail.com](mailto:espenwell@gmail.com)

#### Treasurer

Julia S. Ross (2017-2019)  
262-581-5411  
[j22ross@gmail.com](mailto:j22ross@gmail.com)

#### Directors

Virginia Laurent (2016-2018)  
Publicity Chair  
262-473-4719  
[laurent70@charter.net](mailto:laurent70@charter.net)

Anne Hartwick (2017-2019)  
Social Media Chair  
608-206-1033  
[annehartwick@gmail.com](mailto:annehartwick@gmail.com)

Lisa Dawsey Smith (18-19)  
Newsletter  
262-510-4183  
[Ldawsey06@gmail.com](mailto:Ldawsey06@gmail.com)

Karl Brown (2018-2019)  
[brownk@uww.edu](mailto:brownk@uww.edu)

Tom Drucker (2017-2019)  
262-472-5173  
[druckert@uww.edu](mailto:druckert@uww.edu)

Jane Roberts (2016-2018)  
608-883-2048  
[jrhuntersridge42@gmail.com](mailto:jrhuntersridge42@gmail.com)

### A Note from The Membership Chair by Julia Ross

Great News! Our efforts to recruit new members as well as to get current members to renew has been incredibly successful.

Our current 2019 membership totals 63. This could be the most ever in the history of our humble league. The breakdown is as follows:

Individual Members: 27  
Lifetime Members: 2  
17 Household Members: 34

Six new and active members to our league are as follows. If you see them at a meeting, please introduce yourself. And by the way, all of these amazing individuals came to us through a desire to support the LWV with voter registration assistance.

Ann Bemis, Jean Eichman, Michael Neemann, Gayle Stettler, Nettie Toeller, Ety Wilberding,

### New Year Message by Mary Beth Byrne

WELCOME to 2019!! This is going to be a banner year, and I'm so happy to report that our membership is up to 63, the highest ever!! THANK YOU for joining and for offering your passion and skills to help make democracy work in the Whitewater area. You have helped and offered your time and talents with voter registration, our upcoming candidate forums, a float for the July 4th Parade, fundraising, our upcoming garage sale, the Arts Alliance Public Art Project, etc.~~there is a place for everyone to "plug in" to keep our democracy strong.

Elsewhere in this issue you will learn about preparations to recognize that Wisconsin was the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote. So come and share your ideas and help us celebrate! I just learned that Sweden was the first nation to give women the right to vote in 1718!!!

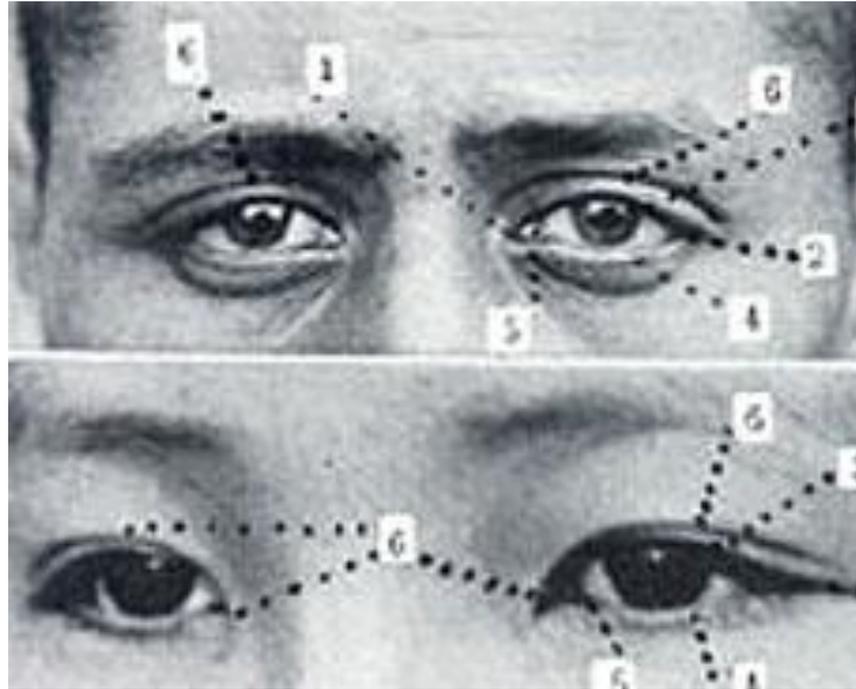
The National League of Women Voters will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2020! Plan now to attend the LWVUS Conference in Washington, D.C.!!

This is a growing and vibrant organization, so let's all work together for the good and benefit of all!

## 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 get our message out to a much broader audience as well as keep our content visible in the long term in your newsfeed.



### Documentary Film to Launch Self-Reflective Membership Discussion on Race by Ellen Penwell

League membership will gather on **Saturday morning, January 26, 10AM-noon**, in Fairhaven’s Fellowship Hall, to view and discuss Episode 1 of a three-part, provocative documentary produced by California Newsreel, **RACE – THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION**. This acclaimed film series, broadcast by PBS, asks, what is this thing we call “race”? Episode I – The Difference Between Us, examines “how recent scientific discoveries have toppled the concept of biological race. The program follows a dozen diverse students who sequence and compare their own DNA. They discover, to their surprise, that their closest genetic matches are as likely to be with people from other “races” as their own. The episode helps us understand why it doesn’t make scientific or genetic sense to sort people into biological races, as it dismantles our most basic myths about race, including natural superiority and inferiority.”

This program represents a beginning effort by our League to enhance our understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion as we seek to infuse our work with these values. In preparation for viewing the film, the series’ producers suggest we consider the following questions *before* watching Episode 1:

1. How would you define race? What does it mean to you?
2. How many races do you think there are? What are they? How do you decide which race someone belongs to?
3. Look around our community. Who do you think is likely to be most similar to you, biologically or genetically? Why?
4. Where do your ideas about race come from? What are the sources of your information?

Please join us in viewing the film and as we compare before- and after-viewing thoughts on these questions and many others in a facilitated group discussion following the one-hour episode. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided.



### **LWVWI 2018 Issues Briefing Summary** by Ellen Penwell

Just days following the Nov 6 midterm election, over 130 members representing local Leagues throughout the state, gathered in Middleton at Holy Wisdom Monastery for the state League's Annual Issues Briefing. It was a day of high content presentations on Elections Security, the Foxconn lawsuit, the role of media in democracy, and the role of art in activism. Wisconsin Elections Commission Interim Administrator Meagan Wolfe outlined cybersecurity measures currently in place protecting Wisconsin elections. Jodi Habush Sinykin, Attorney for Midwest Environmental Advocates, discussed in detail, the importance of protecting the Great Lakes Compact against efforts to direct Lake Michigan waters to the Foxconn Corporation. The presenters were engaging and informative, providing League members with up-to-date information and League perspective needed to educate on these critical issues in their own communities. A panel of regional journalists, moderated by former NPR host Joy Cardin, discussed the challenges of reporting in Wisconsin's divided political landscape and a panel of local citizen activists, led by artist Kelly Parks Snider, spoke on the topic United by Love - United Against Hate, highlighting the importance of inclusion and forgiveness in bridging divides and the use of art as an activist medium for issues-based political expression. Despite the day's robust programming schedule, League members found time to relax in the restorative

surroundings of the Monastery building and grounds and connected with one another, remembering that we work best when we work together toward shared goals – *Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy!*

### **Voto Latino**

At this year's Making Democracy Work Award Presentation Miguel Aranda mentioned his work in bringing a chapter of Voto Latino to Whitewater. In light of continued collaboration between our two organizations, we have asked Miguel to provide an introduction to Voto Latino:

Voto Latino is a pioneering civic media organization that seeks to transform America by recognizing Latinos' innate leadership. Through innovative digital campaigns, pop culture, and grassroots voices, we provide culturally relevant programs that engage, educate and empower Latinos to be agents of change. Together, we aim to build a stronger and more inclusive democracy. Voto Latino Wisconsin focuses its efforts in the State of Wisconsin.

One example of recent work is partnering up with Lyft to offer free rides in Wisconsin, and other states, to polling locations during the 2018 midterm elections. We partnered with the League of Women Voters to assist voter registration efforts.

Blog hyperlink from Lyft further explaining the partnership with Voto Latino: [The Ride to Vote: Use Lyft to Exercise Your Rights](#)

### **2019 Spring Election Summary** by Ellen Penwell

We recently heard from the Whitewater City Clerk's office that a Spring Primary will not be held in our community on February 19 and that the April 2 Spring Election will include the following candidates.

#### **Common Council**

AD1 - Carol McCormick

AD3 - Christopher Grady and Brienne Diebolt-Brown

AD5 - McKinley Palmer

COUNCILMEMBER AT LARGE - Patrick Singer

#### **Municipal Judge**

Chad Buehler

Patrick Taylor

#### **School Board**

Jennifer Kienbaum

Jim Stewart

Amy Hagen Curtis

The League has already scheduled a Candidate Forum for Common Council candidates on Saturday, March 9, 10AM-11:30AM in the City Hall Council Chambers and is considering hosting a forum for the school board candidates on the same day in the afternoon. We will keep you posted as these events develop.

**League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Op-Ed** as published by Urban Milwaukee ([link to article](#)) and in December Highlights Email ([link](#))

### **Lame Duck Bills too Rushed, Secretive**

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has long held that the legislature must be responsible to the citizens. Its leaders, committees, and members should represent the state as a whole as well as their own districts. Legislators should not act in their own interest for partisan gains and to retain power.

The sweeping bills Governor Walker signed were introduced late on a Friday afternoon. The authors of the legislation, Assembly Speaker **Robin Vos** and Senate Majority Leader **Scott Fitzgerald**, did not attend the public hearing the following Monday to answer questions about the proposal, which were passed by both houses of the legislature in the wee hours of Wednesday morning that same week.

Good legislation does not result from a rushed, secretive process with little opportunity for input from the public. Such a process results in sloppy errors and wasted tax dollars. Moreover, it reeks of a partisan power grab. Passing legislation shouldn't be inside baseball. It should be an open and accountable process when those in power are acting on behalf of the people they are representing.

Wisconsinites across the political spectrum value fairness and upholding democratic procedures. These bills and how they've been introduced and passed fly in the face of these values.

We are disappointed that Governor Walker signed these mean-spirited bills which will not afford his newly elected successor, Governor-elect **Tony Evers**, the same authority that he has exercised for eight years, including one he exercised within this past week to solidify the Kimberly Clark deal.

The people of Wisconsin are not well served by partisan shenanigans. We expect our state leaders to work together to serve the people of Wisconsin. It is time to put aside partisanship and start governing.

***Erin Grunze** is the Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. There are 19 local Leagues in Wisconsin. Follow @LWV\_WI on Twitter.*

## **February Speaker Introduction** by Jane Roberts

Please plan to attend the February 21, 2019 League meeting. Former State Senator Tim Cullen (co-chair of the Fair Elections Project) will give us an update on the status of the court case concerning gerrymandering of districts (which League is a part of). This meeting is scheduled for 6:30 at the Cravath Lake Building.

Tim Cullen began his public service at the age of 26 on the Janesville City Council. He worked on the staff of Congressman Les Aspin and served in the State Senate from 1975 to 1987. He was the majority leader for five years. He has served on the Janesville School Board. He was returned to the State Senate in 2010. He served as secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services in the Thompson administration. He and former State Senator Dale Schultz are co-chairs of the Fair Elections Project. Tim is a UW-Whitewater graduate.