

March 2017

League of Women Voters - Whitewater Area

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Calendar of Events

March 16th 7:00pm

All Votes Are Not Created Equal

City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI

April 4th

Spring Election

April 20th 7:00pm

An Epidemic: Opioids

City Council Chambers,
Whitewater, WI

May 20th 9:30am

Annual Membership Meeting

Fairhaven Fellowship Hall,
Whitewater, WI

June 9th - 10th

State Annual Meeting

Green Bay, WI

July 4th Holiday Parade

July 29th, 9am

League Garage Sale

All Votes Are Not Created Equal: How Rules Shape Election Outcomes



Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 7 PM
Council Chambers, Whitewater

The **electoral college** is a topic that comes up for detailed examination every four years. It then recedes into the background, unless it played a role in determining the President. There are some people whose great-grandparents were annoyed by the fact that Benjamin Harrison received fewer votes than Grover Cleveland (who was running for re-election) but received the mantle of office from the electoral college. When some of us were young, a hot topic for debate was the abolition of the electoral college. When elections are close or hotly contested, the role of the electoral college regains some of its fascination.

The result of the last presidential election put the electoral college front and center. In fact, **two of the last five elections resulted in the popular vote winner NOT winning the presidency**. The debate over the electoral college may have been dormant for a while, but the twenty-first century has forced us to revisit some of the most fundamental questions about what democracy should look like. Those who were unhappy with results blame it on the college. Those who are pleased with results pay tribute to the sagacity of having such an institution. It is usually the case that the winners find no need for change, no matter how

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outraged they may have been the last time they lost with the same system.

Professor Eric Loepf of the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin—Whitewater will be addressing the history of the electoral college, its effects on elections past, and its current status. Professor Loepf spoke to the League in the fall in the immediate aftermath of the presidential election when he speculated on what the Trump presidency might mean for the country. His remarks helped us prepare for the first few weeks of the new administration, although it would have been difficult to anticipate everything that has taken place. As many feel especially chagrined as the result of last November's election and the electoral college's role in the outcome, we look forward to hearing what Professor Loepf has to say about whether the system is likely to stand up to another couple of centuries of complaints.

Common Council Candidate Questionnaires

A **ten-question Candidate Questionnaire** was recently forwarded to all Common Council candidates in advance of the **April 4, 2017 Spring Election**. Candidates were given a full two weeks to complete the Questionnaire and, if they choose to respond, their answers will be posted on the League's website, www.lwwwhitewater.org, by the end of the day **Monday, March 13th**.

The League board developed the questions, which range from the standard, "What motivates you to want to become or seek another term as a Common Council member, to more topical questions on how Whitewater might attract a grocery store or encourage the development of single-family housing.

Keeping voters informed and educated on issues of importance in any election is a significant part of the League's mission. **The League encourages you to visit the website and read the candidates' answers before you vote on April 4th**. This is especially important this time because our previously scheduled Common Council Candidate Forum on March 11th was cancelled due to one candidate in the contested District 1 race being unable to attend.

The League's nonpartisan policy discourages



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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. Do your part and make it happen ... this is the time to be active!

holding what is called “an empty chair debate,” which would provide only one of the contested candidates a forum to speak and, therefore, the impression that the League is favoring one candidate over the other.

Candidates Running for Common Council

AD1	Patrick Wellnitz and Carol McCormick
AD3	Chris Grady
AD5	Stephanie Goettl
At Large	Patrick Singer

VOTE ON APRIL 4TH – SPRING ELECTION!

Garage Sale Coming This Summer!



The League’s BIG garage sale fundraiser has been scheduled for **Saturday, July 29th, 8AM-3PM.**

The event will be held once again in **Tom Drucker and Betsy Brandt’s expansive 3-car garage/driveway at 230 S. Cottage Street.** Tom and Betsy graciously hosted the sale in 2013 and 2015 and are willing to do it again. We can’t thank them enough.

A sign-up sheet for interested workers (pre-sale, day-of-sale, and post-sale) will be available at the League’s Annual Meeting on May 20th. For now, please **mark your calendars – July 29th** – and start boxing up items!

Contact Ellen Penwell, sale chairperson, if you are interested in working the event or have questions (262-203-6529, espenwell@gmail.com). New this year - a bake sale component might be added to the event.

Watch for updates!

2016 ELECTION IMPACT SURVEY

- 423 Leagues participated
- 9,238 election related events hosted by Leagues
- 160,000 volunteer hours
- 4+ million utilized VOTE 411.org
- 1,750,000+ printed League voter's guides distributed locally

News from the League of Women Voters Wisconsin

Redistricting Update

The framers of **Wisconsin's legislative districts**, which have been **ruled unconstitutional** by a panel of federal judges, voted in secret last month to spend taxpayer dollars to have high-priced lawyers write an amicus brief in defense of the gerrymandered districts. **Attorney General Brad Schimel last week appealed the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court. All of this will cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of tax dollars, and that's on top of more than \$2.1 million already spent to draw the maps in secret and defend them through two lawsuits to-date!**

If you find this shocking, contact your own legislators and the legislative leadership:

- Let them know how you feel about this abuse of power and tax dollars.
- Tell them Wisconsin can save millions of dollars and create more competitive voting districts in the future by adopting nonpartisan redistricting.
- Urge them to support two bills – AB 44 and SB 13 – which would have the nonpartisan Legislative Reference Bureau draw the maps.
- Tell Senator Fitzgerald and Rep. Vos that these bills deserve a hearing. They did not allow hearings for these proposals last session. What are they afraid of?

--To find your own legislators, [click here and enter your address](#) under **Find My Legislators**, next to the little green map of Wisconsin.

--**Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester)**

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--**Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau)**

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