



50-Year Recognition 2022

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The League has a tradition of recognizing individuals who have been members for 50 years. Each year, we honor these long-time members, many of whom joined a local League elsewhere, but who are celebrating their 50th year of membership with the Dane County League. We are grateful for the dedication of our 50-Year Members.

My Life Before LWV

I grew up in Northwest Wisconsin in the little town of Frederic. Frederic is close to Minnesota so growing up most of the news we followed came from the Twin Cities area. I went to college at UW–Eau Claire. Upon graduation, I married Norman Jensen. We moved to Madison where he attended UW Medical School. From there, we traveled to Boston for his residency and internship. We had a two-year stint in Illinois while my husband was in the Navy during the Vietnam years before we returned to Madison. My husband spent the rest of his career at the UW.

When we returned to Madison, we moved to the westside Greentree neighborhood. There were LOTS of young families in the neighborhood. As I recall, a neighbor who lived down the street encouraged me to join the League. As a stay-at-home mother caring for two young kids it sounded intriguing. I always had an interest in political topics. I was very fortunate because the League Unit I joined, the Tuesday Westside Unit, was very active!

My Life With the League

One early memory I have from my time with the League has to do with the League newsletter. When I first joined, the newsletter was hand-produced and mimeographed on long paper. I volunteered with another friend to go to the League office and collect the pages of the newsletter and then we took it all home and organized, collated, and stapled the newsletter. It was a BIG job because at that time we had around 400-500 members! Although it was quite a task, it was a way I could contribute to the League while still supervising my kids at home.

Another memory I recall is my time assisting long-time treasurer Mary Page. (Mary Page served on the League's board as treasurer during the '70s and '80s). I actually volunteered to serve as the assistant treasurer because of the demands of this position. The dues were sent to me at home and I organized the data of who paid and how much and maintained these lists, which I then shared with Mary Page and the office. Although this was another "behind the scenes" task, it helped the treasurer immensely. I continued to serve in this

capacity for many years. (When I stepped down, the office had to be sure to remove from circulation the printed envelopes for returning dues that had my home address on them.)

I also helped with proofreading *Candidates' Answers*. Through my volunteer efforts for the League I became, and remain, close friends with the League office staff from those years.

The Westside Tuesday Evening Unit was really pretty active for over 30 years. Members hosted meetings in their homes and the leadership for the meetings was shared. In addition, there was a once a month Wednesday meeting where all the League Units met together. Both of these provided great opportunities to meet and mingle with the other league members.

I've definitely seen changes in the League over the years. The membership has changed. At one point the membership fell dramatically to around 250 members. Women becoming more active in careers had some role in changing the level of participation. It is heartening to see that men are now part of our membership and it seems that our membership is growing younger and more professional.

The League has continued to impact me personally. It led me to volunteer as an election poll worker and I worked the election polls for years.

I recognize that the League doesn't necessarily fulfill the same need to meet people and get to know people that it did when I first joined. I do believe, however, that the League remains absolutely necessary! I would hope that others would find the same opportunities and friendships that I have experienced.