



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday, 11–3

April 2022

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President's Message

Christine Clements, president@lwvdanecounty.org

Welcome to Spring 2022. We're happy to see a warm sun and sprouts of green coming, even while understanding that each season arrives with its own set of challenges. The coronavirus has moved to a perhaps less alarming level, although hardly nonexistent, and voting maps that seemed somewhat improved have been overturned in the US Supreme Court. The attempted decimation of voting rights and civil liberties goes on in states across the country while we watch a horrific war unfold in Ukraine. The events in our world can sometimes make us question the impact of our efforts.

Tuesday, April 12

7–8:15 p.m.

LWVDC Virtual Forum

Low-Income Housing: Where Do We Go Next?

The League of Women Voters believes that all people need food, shelter, and access to health care and transportation. Please join us for this virtual forum as we explore how the critical shortage of low-income housing is being addressed in Dane County.

Join us on April 12 to hear from **Justice Castañeda** (Executive Director of Common Wealth Development), **Olivia Parry** (Sr. Planner at the Dane Co. Planning & Development Dept. and Coordinator of the Dane Co. Housing Initiative), and **Matt Wachter** (City of Madison Director of Planning & Community & Economic Development). The Forum will be moderated by **Sue Jennik**, director of the Program Advocacy Committee.

Forums are free and open to the public.

Register for this event [on our website](#).

In the League of Women Voters, our fight for fair maps, fair courts, and fair and transparent elections moves forward. Our efforts to make sure all possible voters are informed, registered, and can get to the polls, and our work to uplift the positions of the League of Women Voters—support for voting rights, equal rights, economic justice, affordable housing, clean water—goes on. Our unwavering commitment to a fair and democratic world fosters optimism and agency during times of setbacks.

I hope what we continue to learn from the world today is that the importance of holding our democratic values close and working to make a difference is as important as it ever was. I hope that we gain strength from seeing what people are willing to endure to live in a democratic society. I hope what we find in this spring season is a vision of where we can go and not just where we are today. League commitments and activities are not superfluous to the bigger concerns in our world right now—they are foundational.

Forward.



Are You Thinking of Attending the State League Annual Meeting in Appleton June 10-11?

All members in attendance will be able to act as voting delegates, although delegates require board approval.

It's also time to select and approve our voting delegates from the Dane County League who will be attending the **2022 LWVUS National Convention to be held June 23-26 in Denver, CO.** Based on our membership numbers, LWVDC may register up to 11 delegates. Voting delegates may attend the convention in person or virtually.

Both of these events are wonderful opportunities to meet and network with your League peers and learn more about the League's work at all levels.

Please let Chris Clements (president@lwvdanecounty.org) know at your earliest possible convenience if you would like more information or are interested in attending either or both events as a voting delegate.

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

SAVE THE DATE! **2022 LWVDC Annual Meeting**

Thursday, June 2
5:30-7 p.m.
Via Zoom

All members of the League of Women Voters of Dane County are invited to join us for our 2022 Annual Meeting the evening of June 2 via Zoom. This is your opportunity to hear from League leadership, reflect on the past year, and help guide what's ahead for the organization.

Stay tuned for more details and registration information coming soon.

At the 2021 Annual LWVDC Membership meeting, Membership approved an extraordinary withdrawal from the Memorial Trust Fund to subsidize 100% of the Year 1 salary of the newly created position of Executive Director (ED). A request is now presented to LWVDC Members to approve annual withdrawals to partially subsidize Year 2 and Year 3 of the ED's salary, as outlined in the report to membership last year. The intent is to withdraw up to two-thirds of the ED's salary in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and up to one-third of the ED's salary in Fiscal Year 2023-2024. At the end of this three-year period, it is expected the Fund Development committee and the Board will have increased the donor base to sustain the ED position going forward.

In compliance with League policy related to the Memorial Trust Fund, the Board gives notice of intent to withdraw up to 8% of the market value of the Memorial Trust Fund as of January 1, 2022, and up to 5% of the market value of the Memorial Trust Fund as of January 1, 2023, upon approval by two-thirds of the LWVDC Board and approval of a majority the members present at the fiscal year 2022-2023 general meeting. These withdrawals will be on an annual basis and only if required.

The Advocacy Corps Invites Members to Join Our Letter-Writing Campaign on Election Integrity

The LWVDC is committed to making democracy work. The Advocacy Corps responds to critical activities and events by engaging members in action-oriented timely campaigns on election and judicial issues, campaign finance reform, and civil discourse. At this time, the Advocacy Corps is developing a letter-writing campaign about election-integrity. To that end, we are recruiting members who can engage in writing letters to newspaper editors and government officials to keep these issues in front of the public as we work to strengthen our democracy.

Please join us in our campaign. We welcome you in one of two ways: You can either join the Advocacy Corps and be involved in developing our outreach campaigns, or you can join us on an ad-hoc basis and participate in this letter-writing campaign on election integrity. We are providing the background information, talking points, and training.

Please contact Advocacy Director Joan Schwarz at advocacy@lwvdanecounty.org, or via telephone at (608) 345-5973.

Behind the Scenes: Social & Racial Equity Focus on “Housing Stability”

Aileen Nettleson, Program Committee Chair (aanett@sbcglobal.net)

In response to member interest, a new Program Committee focus area was initiated this year, Social and Racial Equity. The first forum presented by the subcommittee in February was “Moving from Eviction to Housing Stability.” The second will be held on April 12, “Low Income Housing: Where Do We Go Next?” What are new housing development plans from the City of Madison and Dane County? How do new

projects blend public, private, and nonprofit funding to address the high need to provide more housing for low wage earners? Speakers from the City and County planning departments and a nonprofit organization will address these critical issues to provide for the basic need of housing security to those who often fall between the cracks.

How did our newly formed Social and Racial Equity team arrive at these areas of local need to address in the public forums for the LWVDC? Six very active committee members have met biweekly since August to determine how best to address “Unmet Needs for Basic Necessities of Life in Dane County” within the area of “Ensuring Social Equity,” based on the vote of members on the Annual Survey conducted last spring, as well as to select speakers and plan the forums.

We realized we would first need to narrow which specific “unmet needs” to address. We reached out to community leaders asking the question, “What do you see from your perspective as the most important need the LWV of Dane County should address to create greater social equity in our community?” From conversations with Urban League, Kids Forward, United Way, and NAACP; elected City and County officials and City and County staff; and community members involved with economics, housing development, and the state League, deficits in “Housing” emerged as the highest need.

We heard stories of the myriad problems people face when they have to move from apartment to apartment with children moving between schools. We heard about people being evicted and facing homelessness and difficulty renting another apartment with an eviction record. We read articles and watched videos and programs to learn more. We selected community and government speakers that are working on the ground to address eviction and increase housing options.

We hope these forums help you think about what it is like to face eviction or look for an affordable apartment on limited income. We all need to commit to supporting City and County initiatives to jointly address the essential human need for housing stability for all Dane County residents.

Join us for the April 12 forum by [registering on our website](#). Recordings of the two forums are/will be on the LWV of Dane County website for you to view if you miss them. We encourage you to check out the informative presentations by the speakers and read the related study materials.

Special thanks to the Social and Racial Equity Subcommittee members Pat Patterson, Louise Robbins, Nancy Scherr, Sue Dottl, and Sue Jennik, as well as consulting member Gloria Meyer.

Save the date!

May 12
6-8 p.m.
via Zoom

How We Got Here:

The Hidden History of Diversity in America

Co-sponsored by LWV Dane County, LWV Milwaukee County, LWV Ozaukee County, and LWV Wisconsin

Registration opening soon.
Check the e-News for more details!



Girl Scouts Celebrate 100+ Years: It's Not Just About Cookies

Barb Feeney (barb.feeney@lwvdanecounty.org)

On Saturday, March 12, more than 200 Girl Scouts from the Badgerland Conference gathered at the State Capitol to celebrate over 100 years of the Girl Scout organization and to learn about being active citizens. They roamed the halls attending breakout sessions that included learning the basics of debating, performing a service project, making rally signs, and more. The most popular session was probably the mock voting event put on the Madison City Clerk's office, led by Bonnie Chang and her staff.

Nine LWVDC volunteers were on hand to help at the check-in station and in the breakout rooms, and a few were positioned in the hallways to help the visitors find their way in the confusing maze that is our State Capitol.

Near the close of the event, the Scouts gathered to hear some inspiring speeches. Shannon Henry Kleiber is the author of "On My Honor: Real Life Lessons From America's First Girl Scout," a biography of Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low. She praised Lowe's passion for inspiring girls to live beyond the circumscribed roles of that time and her vision of inclusivity and sisterhood. Girl Scouts of Wisconsin CEO Marci Henderson challenged the girls to feel empowered to make a difference. An amazingly poised and articulate Brownie Scout gave a stirring speech rejecting proposed anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, receiving a round of applause. The Scouts ended their event with a march around the Capitol Square.



Thanks to LWDC volunteers **Joy Cardin, Cari DiTullio, Jolene Esterline, Erin Horswill, Carol Herman, Caryl Terrell, Jan Anderson, and Mary Schmit** for their time in helping this event be a success. It was a reminder that the seeds that grow into active and informed citizenship can be sown early.

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Epic Voter Registration

Marjorie Schuett (mschuett@hootcom.com)

In March 2022, LWVDC returned to Epic Systems in Verona for our first voter registration event there since early 2020. Our tables were strategically placed outside the heavily trafficked cafeterias located in “Grand Central” and in “King’s Cross,” where hungry employees lined up to get the Chicken Tikka Masala special and other gourmet foods.

Epic Systems is one of the largest and fastest growing private companies in Wisconsin. As of February 2022, the company employs 11,300 people and they expect to hire many more by the end of this year. These new employees come from all over the country and will need to register to vote in Wisconsin. Several of those who registered thanked us for making it easy for them by coming to their workplace.



We are grateful to Epic Systems for again hosting this event. Special thanks to Beth Morgan, who organized the voting event and keeps employees apprised of election information in company-wide emails throughout the year. Her coworkers, Alison and Philosophy, also helped us navigate the massive art-filled facility on the day of the event.

Finally, thanks to LWVDC members Sue Fulks, Shirley Haidinger, Beth Fultz, Elizabeth Palmour Dodd, and Alan Kanne, who efficiently helped register and provide critical election information to over 50 employees.

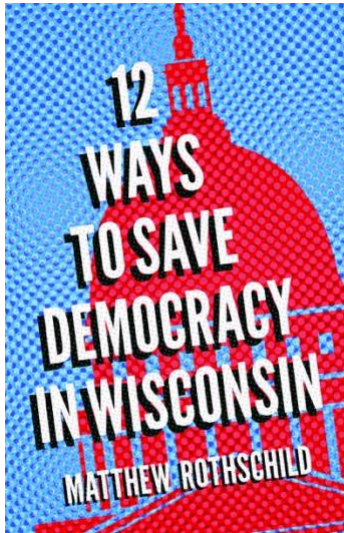


Feb. Book Discussion: “Twelve Ways to Save Democracy in Wisconsin”

Joan Schwarz (advocacy@lwvdanecounty.org)

Matthew Rothschild, Executive Director of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, has profound knowledge of the history of politics in our state. His book, “12 Ways to Save Democracy in Wisconsin,” is replete with all the background one needs to understand the urgent need to make democracy more viable in Wisconsin.

For each issue, Rothschild provides extensive background followed by concrete solutions for citizen action, along with counter-arguments worthy of any debate one may encounter. His tone is clear and his frustration evident at what has happened to the good government this state once had.



His discussion of gerrymandering provides background about the 2011 gerrymandered maps and the struggles we face trying to develop fair maps now. Also important is his analysis of the negative impact of United States Supreme Court decisions that have limited citizens' ability to end partisan gerrymandering.

Rothschild's discussions about election integrity, restrictions on our right to vote, and the pernicious effect of money in our elections are required reading. Decisions from the United States Supreme Court and the Wisconsin Supreme Court have resulted in unlimited amounts of money that undermine our elections. Defining campaign finance reform as a civil rights issue, he expertly links dark money to the urgent need for reform of partisan gerrymandering. Also taking on the issue of judicial integrity, Rothschild is critical of the Wisconsin Supreme Court's lack of recusal rules which are

necessary for a fair bench. Sadly, Wisconsin is 47th out of 50 states in having adequate recusal rules.

Important to Rothschild's analysis is the need for initiatives and referenda in Wisconsin, as 26 other states have for citizen input. Lacking direct democracy, we are living with the pernicious effects of Act 10 on the living standards of citizens; endemic racism against African Americans, Native Americans, Hmong, Latinos, and Asian Americans; and the loss of local control for effective self-government and meaningful media outlets. Explaining how life satisfaction is measurably higher in states that allow direct democracy, Rothschild talks about how to re-focus on the "general welfare" provision in the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution, "not just on the physical and economic security and reasonable equal opportunity and life chances but as the capacity and interest of all citizens to make such contributions to be actively engaged in building their own security."

Mindful of how many problems we are all facing, Rothschild completes his analysis with Appendixes on how to survive the "Dark Ages"; how activists can avoid burn-out; and how to remain respectful with others.

Matt Rothschild's book is an invaluable analysis, chock full of historical background and concrete solutions, and is written in a refreshing, straightforward, and frank manner that we have come to expect of him over the years.

Workshop Review: Depolarizing Within

Joan Schwarz, advocacy@lwvdanecounty.org

The LWVDC Advocacy Corps presented a Braver Angels Workshop entitled "Depolarizing Within" on March 16, 2022. We were so pleased to have 45 members attend the two-and-a-half-hour workshop. At least three-quarters of the members were new to the Braver Angels organization.

Braver Angels was formed in 2016 after the election of Donald Trump. The name at that time was "Better Angels," inspired by President Lincoln's appeal for the peace of his compatriots shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, in which he referred to their "better angels." The organization is now known as "Braver Angels."



**Hold
America
Together**

 **Braver Angels**

Alliances in Braver Angels skyrocketed to 73 nationwide and has served over 60,000 Americans thus far. The group has facilitated 200 Braver Angels debates on campuses, in local communities, and in nationwide debates. Its concept is based on the willingness to “listen to one another without wanting to change the other.”

Cameron Swallow, one of the coordinators for Wisconsin, moderated the workshop, which focused on a self-assessment of our own polarizing triggers and how to counter them. Swallow also discussed how to depolarize within a conversation with those with opposing political views. She facilitated several breakout rooms of three members each in order to discuss how to challenge and counter our own stereotypes and how to make depolarizing distinctions between positions and people, policies and core values, and inconsistency and hypocrisy. Discussions also focused on how inconsistencies between stated values and actual behavior can result from blind spots and the inevitable tensions between competing values and not be evidence of hypocrisy.

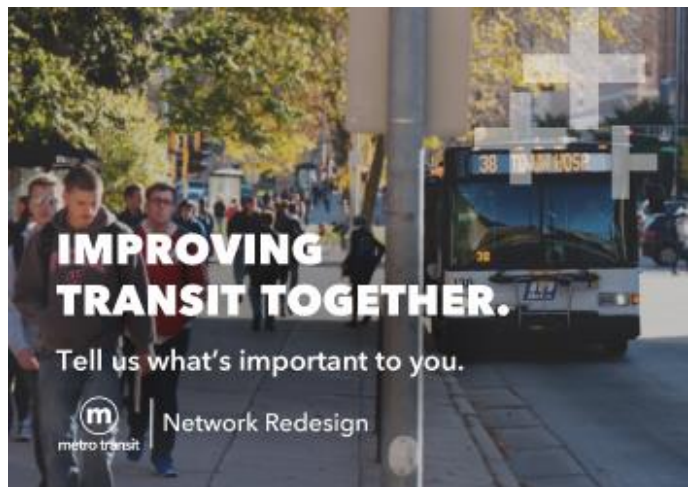
Swallow focused on skills that emphasized how to depolarize conversations with a method referred to as “LAPP”: Learn (listen for others’ values); Acknowledge (recognize another’s views and share one’s own worries and concerns); Pivot (signal a shift in one’s part of the conversation in order to introduce another perspective into the conversation with personal “I” statements); and Perspective (offer depolarizing viewpoints about the complications of the issue, the differences in each other’s backgrounds and experiences, etc.). Swallow’s effective role play as a “red polarizer” and a “blue polarizer” enhanced the discussion amongst members throughout the evening. Member evaluations at the end of the workshop were strong and supportive of how effective the workshop was, how engaged members felt during the workshop, and how impactful the breakout rooms and group discussions were to our members.

The Advocacy Corps is pleased that the Braver Angels workshop was so warmly received by our members in our effort to learn how to bridge the political divide. By doing so, we can all work to rebuild the trust, civil discourse and the sense of community that form the foundations of our democracy.

Reflections from Midwinter Check-in for Transportation Options Challenge

Cara Lee Mahany Braithwait (mahany0504@gmail.com)

People and organizations around the world are advocating for nations to take on the serious challenge of de-carbonizing our world. Meanwhile, the individuals participating in the Transportation Options Challenge are working to do their part. On February 22, 2022, Transportation Options Challenge participants and fellow supporters gathered virtually to share experiences in cutting transportation-related carbon. Below we share the results from an informal non-scientific survey (16 respondents) about Madison Metro’s current state and the redesign that is in the works.



How will you be affected by Madison Metro's Draft Network Redesign?

- 28% said better.
- 45% responded 'Don't know' and 'depends.'
- 14% said it 'depends on where I am going.'
- 14% stated they will be worse off.

The number of people who noted "don't know" or "it depends" likely reflects a lack of knowledge of the current plans. Given the population that we are representing, it is possible that the ones who note 'better' live near the current suggested BRT corridors.

What do you look for in a comfortable transit experience?

- People want friendly, clean, unobstructed aisles.
- 6 respondents wanted to be sure to stay connected while on the bus.
- 5 respondents cited bright unwrapped busses.

How far are you willing to walk to a bus stop?

- The average walk time was 4 minutes.
- 57% wanted a max of 5-minute walk.
- 42% wanted a 2-minute walk.
- Responses suggest that bus stops in hilly areas need to be closer to flat areas.

How long are you willing to wait at a bus stop after you arrive?

A 10-minute wait seemed agreeable to 64% of the respondents, with 30% noting 15 minutes and one noting 5 minutes. However, many of the respondents (40%) also noted that they expected to be able to manage the waiting time by using online schedules. Real-time tracking underlines a need to provide access to bus routes and should not be dependent on smartphones. Reader boards such as around the capitol would go a long way to helping people plan their trips.

How are you affected by the hills in Madison when accessing a bus stop?

The majority of respondents again noted that hills are not an issue for them, but this may reflect the service area we polled, predominantly the West side of Madison. See the note about bus stops in number 3 above

How do you feel about alternative last-mile transportation solutions to allow you to travel to more distant bus stops (e.g., bicycles, scooters)?

Half the respondents noted that they would bring their "last mile" transportation, and others said it would need to be found at the bus stop that they disembarked.

Ride with the Pros: **Bus Ride with Madison Metro in April and E-Bike Ride with BCycle in May**

*Take the mystery out of riding a bus
and the mystery out of using BCycle!*

You see them go by and think: "One day, I'll learn to take the bus or ride BCycle's e-bikes." But we often put it off because many of us aren't sure how to figure out the route, hop on, or how to pay.

Join the LWVDC's Climate Subcommittee on Wednesday, **April 20** for part one of *Ride with the Pros*, a ride-the-bus field trip with Madison Metro experts. They will talk us through the steps and give us the pro tips from apps to Google Maps that help us get where we want to go—bring your questions! Then join us again on **May 20** for an e-bike tour with [Madison BCycle](#). Watch your Enews for details.

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New Members

We welcome these new members who joined us in February 2022. An [updated member directory](#) is available on our website. If you have forgotten the password, there is a link to contact the webmaster for help.

Do you want to join the League?
[Sign up for a membership online.](#)

Johanna Coenen
Mary Irene Connor
Maury Cotter
Jane Feuerstein
Erin Horswill

Sharon Lezberg
Connie Lythjohan
Susan Martin
Mary Pinkerton
Gordon Ridley

Patricia Schubert
Susan Stein
Ann Varda
Marcia Wright

Contributions

Our work is supported by financial contributions beyond membership dues. Thank you to these supporters who donated in February 2022.

General Donations

Laura Chern
James Cory
Lili Crane

Larissa DeLain
Carolyn Jane Gillis
Barbara Henke

Daniel Johannsen
Joan Schwarz

Valentine's Day Appeal

Julie Allen
Mary Anglim
Gail Bliss
Harriette Burkhalter
Joy Cardin
Vivian Chappell
Laura Chern
Christine Clements
Lili Crane
Larissa DeLain

Sandra Drew
Margaret Fuguitt
Kathleen Fullin
Lois Harr
Barbara Henke
Jean Jacobson
Nancy Jensen
Kathryn Johnson
Andrea Kaminski
Kleo Baruth Kritz

Joan Lundin
Sara Markham
Carol Ottenstein
Sandra Pfahler
Joan Schwarz
Rose Sime
Deborah Speckmann
Priscilla Thain
Sandra Vandervest
Dorothy Whiting



Discussion Units

Many League members meet in one of five units to discuss the topic of each forum, using the resource/study materials provided by the program planners to guide the conversation. The discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Units meet regularly at different times and locations, including via Zoom (all in-person meetings are in Madison unless otherwise noted). Find a unit meeting that's convenient for you and participate! Details below.

Currently, each discussion unit decides whether to meet virtually or in person. If you are planning to attend a meeting for the first time, please contact the unit leader ahead of time. [Consult the calendar](#) for the most up-to-date information about specific meetings.

Unit: Prairie Ridge (*This group is open only to Prairie Ridge residents at this time.*)

Time: 3:30 p.m., third Monday of the month

Location: Perennial Learning Center, Oakwood Village Prairie Ridge, 5565 Tancho Dr.

Leaders: [Dorothy Wheeler](#) (608) 630-5163

Unit: West / Middleton

Time: 6:30 p.m., third Monday of the month

Location: Virtual, via Zoom

Leader: [Ralph Petersen](#) and [Helen Horn](#) (608) 231-1807 and [Gloria Meyer](#) (608) 288-8160

Unit: Central West

Time: 12:45 p.m., third Tuesday of the month

Location: Virtual, via Zoom

Leader: [Kathy Johnson](#) (608) 238-1785

Unit: Northeast Side

Time: 3:30 p.m., third Wednesday of the month

Location: Virtual, via Zoom

Leaders: [Karen Gunderson](#) (608) 729-4351

Unit: Downtown Dinner

Time: 5:15 p.m., third Wednesday of the month

Location: Virtual, via Zoom

Leader: [Ingrid Rothe](#) (608) 556-3174

Upcoming Events

Apr. 12	Lively Issues Forum on Low-Income Housing, 7 p.m.
Apr. 13	LWVDC Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
May 12	"Nurturing Diversity" Virtual Forum, 6 p.m.
June 2	LWVDC Annual Meeting (evening)

2022 Elections

Apr. 5	Spring Election
Aug. 9	Fall Partisan Primary
Nov. 8	Fall General Election

