



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday, 8–1

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Members - We Need Your Input!

What programs would you like to see next year? In early March, the Program Committee will be sending out an online survey to get your assessment of the current program and to find out what you would like to see as we develop our program for 2021-22. So please stay on the lookout for your program survey. When you see a heading that says **"2021-22 Member Input Survey"** in the e-news or in your email, please take time to fill out the survey.

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

7 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.

C'mon – Wisconsin Needs Clean Energy! – Exploring win-win aspects of an energy transition

Join us for this forum as we explore the win-win aspects of Wisconsin's alternative energy transition. Wisconsin's aging energy systems send approximately \$14.4 billion out of our state each year to purchase fossil fuels. That money can be redirected for in-state use when WI shifts to renewable energy sources and efficiency upgrades. But WI taxpayers will benefit most if the multi-pronged transition is designed to ensure a win-win outcome for all rather than "winner take all." Guest speakers will sketch out our energy transformation from a full palette of possibilities, addressing key questions: What are the barriers to progress? Who is training the workforce for clean energy jobs? What's in it for rural communities? How can we ensure benefits are shared evenhandedly by all and protect our natural world? And how do system-wide energy efficiencies get buy-in from local governments and consumers?

Scott Coenen, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Conservative Energy Forum (WICEF)

Sam Dunaiski, Distributed Renewable Energy Program Director for RENEW Wisconsin

Dr. Kenneth Walz, Director of the Center for Renewable Energy Advanced Technological Education at Madison Area Technical College

You can register [here](#).

Click [here](#) for more information about the forum.

Forums are free and open to the public.

President's Message

Christine Clements,
president@lwvdanecounty.org

The last several weeks have been a roller coaster ride, not unlike the entire last year, from the violent physical assault on our nation's capitol to the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day to the peaceful transfer of power at the inauguration of our 46th President, Joseph R. Biden. In the midst of this, the Dane County League held its annual Lively Issues Forum, combined with our Centennial Challenges celebration, with two impressive presentations: our own commissioned poem by Madison poet Fabu, and the keynote presentation from Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins. As we move past what Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins defines as a "year of reckoning" to face the challenges of 2021, we are reminded by Fabu that we are "better together than apart" — the same message we carry from President Biden's inaugural speech and the incredible insights of Amanda Gorman, our youngest inaugural poet.

This year, the Dane County League continues its work to more fully engage all citizens in our democracy through voter registration and education, and through advocacy and action. Our redistricting efforts continue, as do our investigations of state infrastructure concerns, ranked-choice voting, good government, climate, and social and criminal justice issues. Our book clubs, forums, and voter registration drives will carry on. But several changes will also be taking place. Perhaps the most noticeable will be the addition of an executive director to our local League. We are in the final stages of making our decision and hope to be introducing you to our new executive director in the March *Bulletin*. We are very excited about the opportunities this change will offer us to present a more visible voice to the community and to expand our partnerships and member engagement for increased impact.

We hope you will also see our ever-increasing commitment to being a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive league. Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins reminds us that we can't hold the notion of accountability with authenticity if we don't put our own house in order. Beyond inviting others to join us, we will need to go to

**Thursday, February 18, 2021
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

**A Virtual Public Issues
Film Screening and Forum**

**Crisis Cops: Creating
Communities of Care**

Join us for this special screening of the 25-minute version of the HBO award-winning documentary, *Ernie and Joe: Crisis Cops*, followed by presentations by and audience discussion with Joe Smarro, one of the "crisis cops." We will also hear from Dane County law enforcement officers who are implementing trauma-informed care strategies, as well as from a guest with mental health lived experience. The *Ernie and Joe* documentary, produced and directed by Jenifer McShane, follows two police officers with the San Antonio Police Department who are diverting people away from jail and into mental health treatment, one 911 call at a time. Registrants for this event will have the opportunity to view the 95-minute version of the film before or after the forum.

Nikyra McCann, owner and founder of Still Standing Enterprise

Sgt. Sarah Shimko, Supervisor of Madison Police Department's Mental Health Unit

Joe Smarro, Founder and CEO of SolutionPoint+, a national training and consulting firm that focuses on cultivating mental wellness to maximize human capital and promote safety within organizations

Officer Joel Zietsma, McFarland Police Department

You can register [here](#).
Click [here](#) for more information about the forum.

**Forums are free and open to the
public.**

them with even greater focus. We will be working to sharpen our DEI lens with regard to who we are, as well as in the work we do.

The challenges of 2021 are daunting. Fortunately, there is no shortage of inspirational quotes – even from the past two weeks — to move us into 2021 with commitment and courage. Given that we are on the heels of a difficult 2020, I offer the insight of a member of our more immediate community, Governor Tony Evers:

“Many of the challenges of 2020 will no doubt carry into this new year... But as we reflect on these challenges — the magnitude of what this past year presented us, and the work we did together to prepare, adapt, and respond — let us also remember to grant ourselves grace, to permit ourselves perspective, to recognize our own resilience.”

And remember that we are better together than apart.

Why I Give – Nancy Pekar

Megan Severson, meganseverson@gmail.com

Photos provided by Nancy Pekar

Nancy Pekar decided to donate to the League of Women Voters Dane County in honor of her mother, Sally Gleason, who has been an active member and leader with the League’s membership committee. “She has been telling me about her involvement for a few years now,” Nancy said. “I loved how much it energized her.”

The idea for the donation first came to Nancy while working at the polls during early voting and on Election Day this past year where she lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. After signing up to help out at the polls in her county, Nancy didn’t realize that she would actually be paid for her time. “Since I didn’t need the money, I decided that donating my poll worker income to LWVDC would be a fitting tribute to my mom,” Nancy said. “I also appreciated that it is a nonpartisan organization. It doesn’t matter what you believe, you should VOTE.”



Nancy Pekar and her mother, Sally Gleason



Sally was surprised and thrilled to learn of the donation in her honor. “I appreciated that Nancy could work at the polls when she knew that I could not,” Sally said. “And that she chose to give the payment she received as a poll worker to an organization I value shows that she appreciates my commitment to ensuring that all citizens can vote.”

Amended Bylaws Need Membership Approval

Marilyn Stephen, mfs6100@gmail.com

At the LWVDC Annual Meeting in May, members will be asked to approve amendments to our Bylaws. Wisconsin law requires non-profit organizations to have bylaws that establish how the board of directors will manage the organization. The LWVDC bylaws support the work of hundreds of our member volunteers. Bylaws provide a broad blueprint for how the board operates, and in our League, the bylaws can only be amended by a vote of the members.

Some of the amendments are based on recommendations by national non-profit organizations such as BoardSource that provide advice, training, and support to local nonprofits. One area of crucial importance is Governance, or how the board and organization is managed. League members have the right to know that their investment of time and money is being carefully managed for both today and the future.

The bylaws amendments that the board is recommending will be described in three separate Bulletin articles in February, March, and April. The topics are *The Structure of the Board*, *The Committee Structure*, and *Other Good Governance Provisions*. Links will be provided in each article to both the current and proposed bylaws.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOARD

The proposed amendments to the bylaws will change some provisions and add new provisions to the sections titled *Board of Directors* (Article V) and *Officers* (Article V).

- **The size of the board will be limited to a minimum of ten members, but no more than fifteen.** The board will consist of the officers, four to six elected directors, and up to three appointed directors. The current bylaws do not establish parameters for the size of the board. Too small, and the work will suffer, yet a board that is too large can mean that conducting business becomes overly complicated.
- **Candidates for elected positions may choose either one- or two-year terms.** Recruiting volunteers to run for the board can be difficult, so offering an option to select the length of the commitment is helpful.
- A new provision being added to the bylaws is a requirement that **no one can serve on the board for more than three consecutive terms or six years**, whichever is longer. It is important to the vitality of a board that new people are sought after and given an opportunity to become leaders. Nothing would prevent a board member from taking time off and returning to the board.
- Another new provision sets out **a procedure for removal of a board member who is not fulfilling their commitment to the board**. While everyone hopes this will not be needed, good governance means that the organization has a process in place to address all possible scenarios.
- The amended bylaws do not provide for a President-Elect.
- The amendments provide clear authority for electronically conferenced meetings.
- The amendments clarify that co-officers are elected positions.

View the [Current Bylaws](#).

View the [Amended Bylaws](#).

Amended Bylaws will be submitted to the members for approval at the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Finishing the Fight in Our Second Century

Lisa Janairo, ljanairo129@gmail.com

*Forgiving divisions in our past
women celebrate 100 years of voting freedom
along with 100 years of service by Dane County League of Women Voters.*

*These 100 years create a more perfect democracy where everyone
participates no matter their race, gender, economic status, or language.
Truly women are better together than apart.*

“Centennial Challenges,” our Lively Issues Conversation on January 16, began with these words from Madison poet laureate Fabu, written in celebration of our chapter’s centennial celebration. The “divisions in our past” are covered in Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins’ book *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters*, which — as Louise Robbins noted in [her excellent blog post](#) — chronicles the “deep strains of bigotry” held by some of the League’s “towering heroines” and the actions by League members to actively discourage full participation by women of color in the struggle to achieve suffrage for women. One of those “towering heroines” is Wisconsin’s own Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of LWV, who famously assuaged the fears of white southerners about passage of the 19th Amendment by saying, “White supremacy will be strengthened, not weakened, by women’s suffrage.”

The first African American president of the national LWV, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins focused her talk on “Finishing the Fight” — on bringing about her vision of the League as an organization that recognizes “the value of all people in reality, not just rhetoric; in value, not just voice/visuals; and in beliefs, not just benefits.” She asked the 115 attendees, “Is finishing the fight our charge, and should we accept that responsibility?” Had we been in a room together, the answer would have been a resounding “Yes!” Quoting Catt, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins said, “What should be done, can be done; what can be done, let us do.”

Acknowledging that, despite her flaws, Catt was a visionary, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins said, “We need to amplify the good and learn from the inexcusable.” She encouraged us to “acknowledge the past, learn from it, and use it as the foundation for a better future,” and challenged us to give women of color the recognition they deserve in League history. Her book documents the many women of color who fought tirelessly at the national level — women like Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary Church Terrell, and Fanny Jackson Coppin. But there are women of color at the state and chapter level who deserve recognition, too, such as Delilah L. Beasley, a journalist, historian, and activist in the League in Alameda County, California, during the 1920s. What is the untold story of women of color right here in Dane County or in the State of Wisconsin?

The LWVDC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee is attempting to answer this question with a long-term project to study our chapter’s past with specific regard to involvement of women of color. As Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins noted, understanding and overcoming our past is an important part of our work to diversify the League and keep the organization relevant as the demographics of our nation change. But it’s important to us as Americans, too — as people — because, as she observed, systemic racial and social injustice is a major new crisis facing our nation, our society, and our democracy. “We need to transform our thinking and value one another,” she said, going on to quote the White House proclamation on Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday: “It is clear now more than ever before that we can no longer allow the American Dream to be deferred for Black Americans.” She urged us to use “Making Democracy Work” to influence policy at all levels to bring about the changes that are needed to dismantle systemic racism.

In her book and her talk, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins emphasized the need to be mindful of principle in addition to practicality, to be transformative, not just transactional. For example, diversifying the membership of the League isn’t just a matter of better publicizing our events to targeted audiences. Instead, we need to “transform our thinking” and engage in what matters to the people we’re trying to reach — to “make a better investment” in what’s going on in those other organizations. The DEI Committee will be exploring this idea in the coming months as well.

It's important to understand that the DEI work of the League is not something that stands alone or apart. It isn't a separate square on our organization chart, or a box that needs to be checked as we conduct voter services or develop program ideas. In the words of Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins, it's something that needs to become "part of the organization's fabric...that cannot be frayed."

As this article goes to print, the DEI Committee is preparing to continue the conversation about "Finishing the Fight" during our first quarterly DEI Café of 2021, scheduled for January 30. In next month's *Bulletin*, I'll share some of the ideas from that conversation. In the meantime, if you are interested in learning more about the DEI Committee — or if you'd like to join — feel free to reach out to me at ljanairo129@gmail.com.

Redistricting Reform

Janine Edwards and the Dane County Working Group on Fair Maps, janine.c.edwards@gmail.com

In 2021, redistricting is one of the most important functions of local and state government. Why is redistricting so important? Redistricting occurs only once every ten years — after the Census is taken — and it sets the boundaries of voting districts throughout the state. The purpose of redistricting is to ensure equal population in each district. Therefore, this process determines how we, the people of Wisconsin, are represented in local, state, and federal government for the next decade. If the process is executed in a fair, nonpartisan manner, every person's vote will count in every election. If the process is gerrymandered, as was done in 2011, the state legislators who are currently in power will very likely stay in power for ten more years.

Wisconsin is considered the most gerrymandered state in the union. The gerrymandered districts set up in secret by the majority party legislators in 2011 have been extremely effective at keeping that same party in power. If we allow gerrymandering to occur again in this redistricting process, we can espouse positions on national popular vote, ranked choice voting, automatic voter registration, taking money out of politics, and other government reforms without bringing about any meaningful change. Why? Because the legislators in power will be safe in their gerrymandered districts, likely getting reelected time after time for the next 10 years. This is why redistricting is so important. We LWV members need to engage in the process at the municipal, county, and state levels to ensure that government can fulfill the needs and desires of all the people in the state.

In Case You Missed It...

A lot has happened on our blog, *Swinging for the Fences*, since the last *Bulletin*.

In *Our Tale of Two Cities*, Meg Gordon makes the case for civility, especially amongst the high-minded Madison crowd.

Observations on the 2020 Presidential Election and the Electoral College, penned by League member and attorney Joan Schwarz, offers readers a few thoughts on the November election and the fragility of our electoral system.

In *High Time for The Untold Story* League member Louise Robbins opens the page on the reasons for publishing *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters* by Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, the League's first president of African American descent.

In *Carbon Junkies One and All* Meg Gordon, chair of our League's Climate Crisis subcommittee, makes the case for curbing our addiction to carbon, complimented with fabulous images by guest photographer Steve Pyle.

The Process of Reapportionment and Redistricting

The process of reapportionment begins when the U.S. Census data are delivered to the President, who then decides how many U.S. representatives there will be from each state. In Wisconsin, there are no constitutional or statutory requirements for drawing congressional districts. The U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 govern the process. Since 1963, there has been little difficulty in Wisconsin's drawing of the congressional maps. This is not the case with state maps.

The Wisconsin Legislature has the authority to draw both congressional and state legislative lines. Article IV, section 3 of the Wisconsin Constitution states, "At its first session after each enumeration made by the authority of the United States, the legislature shall apportion and district anew the members of the senate and assembly, according to the number of inhabitants." The federal requirements of equal population and minority protection apply to both congressional and state redistricting. In Wisconsin, redistricting laws are enacted just as other laws; that is, the state redistricting bill must pass both the Assembly and the Senate and be signed into law by the governor. If the governor vetoes the redistricting bill, the legislature can override the veto with a two-thirds majority in both houses. If the governor and legislature cannot agree on redistricting maps, the dispute is taken into the courts. In recent decades, except for 2011, Wisconsin's maps have been put in place by the courts.

The drawing of boundaries for the state legislative districts occurs in three phases after the state receives the U.S. census data:

- Phase 1 — the county boards draw tentative supervisory district plans.
- Phase 2 — the municipalities adjust their ward boundaries with population changes.
- Phase 3 — the counties adopt their final supervisory plans based on the ward boundaries and cities adopt aldermanic districts, if applicable.

The municipalities and counties provide their maps as input for the drawing of the state legislative districts. That is the process determined by the Wisconsin Constitution. It had been done that way until the gerrymandered districts were drawn in secret in 2010-2011 by legislators and private attorneys. To make sure every vote counts, we cannot let gerrymandering happen again. We, the people, must ensure that our legislators draw maps based upon the municipal and county districts.

Timeline for Redistricting

Redistricting is time sensitive. The Wisconsin process is designed to take place beginning in January 2021 and concluding by September 2021. Each of the three phases must be completed in sixty days, and the next phase cannot begin until the prior phase is completed. Given these requirements, the entire process is expected to take place within 180 days, or approximately six months.

The traditional timeline follows:

- U.S census data are delivered to Wisconsin by March 31, 2021
- Phase 1 — April 1 to May 31, 2021
- Phase 2 — June 1-July 31, 2021
- Phase 3 — August 1-September 30, 2021

This timeline is predicated on the census data being delivered to the President by December 31 of the census year. We know that the census data were not delivered to the President by December 31, 2020. Congress can authorize delays due to COVID-19, although it has not done so yet. Any official delay would push back the traditional timeline. The only time requirement for the Wisconsin Legislature (as quoted above) is to “apportion and district anew” in its first session after the census data are delivered.

Call to Action

Members of LWVDC formed the Dane County Working Group on Fair Maps in November 2020 to focus on achieving nonpartisan voting maps in 2021. Our purpose is to work within Dane County and to coordinate closely with the LWVWI Working Group on Fair Maps on work throughout the state. As Executive Director of LWVWI Debra Cronmiller has said, our group “can be the boots on the ground” for legislative work because of our location and large membership. Currently, ten Dane County members are working diligently and enthusiastically on three branches of redistricting:

- ✓ legislative bills
- ✓ legal challenges to fair maps
- ✓ grassroots efforts to pressure the legislators to draw nonpartisan maps

Working with the [Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition](#), the LWVWI Working Group on Fair Maps is designing a campaign to pressure legislators to draw fair maps. ***You will soon see more information and a Call to Action from our LWVWI to participate in this campaign. Be alert to the state Call for Action.***

Public Hearings

In Phase 3 of the redistricting process, the county board of supervisors is required to obtain public input (Redistricting in Wisconsin 2020, p. 29). Public hearings will allow LWV members to attend and state our positions on fair maps.

Conclusion

We members of the LWVDC have a significant role to play in state and county government during the next eight months. We need to bring pressure to bear on our state legislators to follow the process set up in Article IV of the Wisconsin Constitution and use the district maps drawn by municipalities and counties as the basis for drawing the state district maps. Only then will we end gerrymandering in this state and ensure that every vote counts.

END GERRYMANDERING

EVERY VOTE MUST COUNT



Candidates Answers' Available

Responses from candidates for the February 16 primary election are [now available online](#). All Dane County citizens can vote in the primary for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Some residents have primary races on their ballot for city alders, school board members, one county board district, and one state senate district.

Mock Election – RCV

Get to know ranked choice voting by participating in our mock online election.

Rank your favorite pizzerias and see who comes out on top.

[Click here to vote!](#)

Stay tuned for results in the March *Bulletin*.

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Favorite Pizzeria". It asks users to compare five local pizzerias. The interface includes a "Choice list" with buttons to add "Rocky Rococco", "Sugar River", "Glass Nickel", "Ian's", and "Roman Candle". To the right is a "Your ballot:" section with a numbered list from 1 to 5. Instructions at the bottom read: "Double check your ballot. Then click the 'Vote!' button to cast your vote." A "Vote!" button with a checkmark is visible at the bottom right.

Alternative Voting Systems Info-Sessions

The study committee on ranked choice voting and alternative voting systems is ready to get you up to speed on its research. We are hosting a series of one-hour info-sessions on some of the main topics explored during the study. You can register to attend one or each individual session.

[Register here.](#)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| • Sunday Feb. 21, 4 p.m. | Wisconsin's Current Voting Systems and Statutes |
| • Sunday Feb. 28, 4 p.m. | All About Approval Voting |
| • Sunday Mar. 7, 4 p.m. | All About Ranked Choice Voting |
| • Sunday Mar. 14, 4 p.m. | All About Proportional Representation and Multi-Winner Elections |



How to Evaluate a Voting System

RCV Study Committee, rcvstudy@lwvdanecounty.org

Our democracy relies on fair elections, so the voting system that we use to conduct those elections is of utmost importance. But how do we know if our voting system is best serving our needs? What criteria should be used to evaluate a voting system?

There is a variety of criteria that could be used to evaluate voting systems. Criteria may focus on voter behavior, voter motivation, election administration costs, campaign tactics, whether a system can be weakened by bad faith actors or more. Below is a list of possible criteria that could be used to evaluate a voting system. This list is in alphabetical order so as to not imply any ranking of importance.

Cost and Ease of Election Administration

How easy is it to administer an election for a given voting system? Does the voting system have higher or lower election administration costs compared to other systems?

Easy to Understand Voter Process and Election Outcome

How easy is the voting process and system for voters to understand? Will voters be able to successfully fill out a ballot? Will voters understand and have confidence in the results of the election?

Majority Support for Winners

Does the winner of an election obtain the majority of the votes? Is it possible to win without receiving a majority of the votes?

Minority Representation / Proportional Representation

Does the system allow for representation of minority opinions and underrepresented communities? Does the voting system encourage proportional representation?

Positive/Negative Campaigning

Does the voting system encourage positive campaigning? Does it discourage negative campaigning?

Spoiler Effect

Is the voting system susceptible to the spoiler effect? A spoiler effect refers to cases where an additional candidate pulls support from the most similar candidate, ultimately resulting in the most dissimilar candidate winning the election.

Strategic Nomination Risk

Can bad faith actors alter election results by strategically nominating candidates, with no intention of those candidates winning? The most common examples of strategic nomination involve bad faith actors nominating candidates to take advantage of the spoiler effect. Strategic nomination risk could also be decreased if safeguards and deterrents exist in the overall election system.

Tactical vs Sincere Voting

Does the system encourage voters to vote for the candidate that they sincerely want to win? Or does the system encourage voters to vote tactically to prevent their least-preferred candidate from winning?

Third Party and/or Independent Participation

Does the system increase or decrease the ability for third parties and independent candidates to participate?

Voter Choice and Expression

Is a voter presented with all available options on the ballot? How fully is a voter able to express their preferences?

Voter Participation and Turnout

Does the voting system encourage voter participation and voter engagement? Does the voting system increase or decrease voter confidence that their vote will count? Does the voting system allow lower turnout elections to have disproportionate influence over outcomes?

Wasted Votes

Does the voting system maximize the effective votes? Does it lead to a high number of wasted votes?

While the above criteria identify the general expectations a society may have of its voting system, experts have also defined some mathematically defined criteria for voting systems. These mathematically defined criteria focus solely on how votes lead to election outcomes, and they evaluate whether those outcomes satisfy logical mathematical principals. Below is a selection of some of the more commonly used mathematically defined criteria but note that it is not an exhaustive list.

Majority Criterion

If a candidate receives the majority of the first-rank votes, that candidate should win. It should not be possible for a candidate to receive the majority of first-rank votes and lose. *Note that this is different than the Majority Support for Winners criterion above in that it is concerned only with candidates that do have that the majority of the votes and does not apply to elections where no candidate receives the majority of votes.*

Condorcet Winner

If a candidate would win in a head-to-head competition against every other candidate in the election, then that candidate should win. It should not be possible for a candidate to lose if that candidate would win in a head-to-head competition against all other candidates.

Condorcet Loser

A candidate that loses in a head-to-head competition against every other candidate should lose. It should not be possible for a candidate to win if that candidate loses in a head-to-head competition against all other candidates.

Consistency / Participation

If Candidate A is winning with one set of ballots, adding an additional set of ballots where Candidate A is winning should still result in Candidate A winning. Voting honestly should always be better than not voting at all.

Monotonicity

It should not be possible to harm a candidate by increasing that candidate's rank on your ballot. It should not be possible to help a candidate by decreasing their rank on your ballot.

Later No Harm / Later No Help

The act of adding a lower-ranked preference to a ballot should not harm or help candidates ranked higher on the ballot. In other words, indicating a second choice preference should not prevent your first choice preference from winning.

Independence of Clone Alternatives

Adding a non-winning candidate that is similar to an existing candidate should not change the outcome. A voting system fails this criterion if it is prone to the 'spoiler effect,' where the presence of a similar candidate decreases the chance of one of them winning. A voting system fails this criterion if it is prone to the 'teams effect,' where the presence of similar candidates increases the chance that one of them will win.

Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives

The addition of a non-winning candidate should not affect the result of an election. For example, adding a third candidate to an election should only affect the outcome of the election if that third candidate wins.

There is not a single voting system that meets every one of these criteria. In fact, some of the criterion cannot be 'met' since they are not posing yes/no scenarios. For example, every voting system will have election costs. A voting system does not meet or fail this criterion, but rather lands on a spectrum for comparison against other voting systems. And in some cases, criteria may directly trade-off with one another, causing it to be impossible for a single system to be strong in both.

We should approach evaluating voting systems not in search of a single system that has no flaws, but in search of a system that has the most utility for our democracy at this point in time. One must consider the **relative importance of the criteria**, the **extent and frequency to which a voting system meets or does not meet each criterion**, and the **likelihood that a specific failing could be used strategically to undermine the system**. Have thoughts on these evaluation criteria? Send your ideas and comments to the study committee at rcvstudy@lwvdanecounty.org.

New Members

We welcome these new members who joined us in November and December. 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 Alex
Barbara Arnold
Karen Bassler
Carlene Bechen
Vicki Berenson
Pamela Clinkenbeard
Norma Davidson-Zielske

Jerry Dietzel
Adelie Ehlert
Jay Ferm
Irene Golembiewski
Lisa Goodman
Shel Gross
Susan Latton

Farhat Malik
John Moore
Tom Poppe
Kathy Russeth
Angela West Blank
Sarah Zutz

Valentine's Day Appeal

Valentine's Day has a special significance for the League of Women Voters. On February 14, 1920 American women gained the right to vote. It is also the date the national League of Women Voters came into being and the day the League of Women Voters of Dane County League was established.

Steeped in 101 years of history and symbolism, Valentine's Day reminds us of all that we have accomplished, as well as all that still needs to be done.

We can point with pride at the growth of our membership, the increased number of people we have helped register to vote, our extensive outreach programs, and the impact we have on local and regional politics. At the same time, we remain committed to our continued work to address issues such as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, redistricting, social and economic justice, and climate change.

This year, as our nation embarks on a new chapter in its political life, the League remains a strong and effective partner in ensuring the voices of its people are heard.

Please consider helping us continue this grand tradition with a gift of any amount.

[Click here to donate now.](#) Or send a check to LWVDC, 720 Hill St., Suite 200, Madison, WI 53705-3539.

You can help encourage others to support the League and its programs by sharing our message with friends and family through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Again, thank you for giving—from the heart.

In Memory of Mary Bean

Longtime League member Mary Bean passed away on November 27, 2020. She was an active and vocal proponent of League ideals throughout her life and contributed at both the state and local levels. She also served as LWVDC president from 1974-1978. Her passion for the community can be seen by the wide variety of organizations to which she dedicated her time, including Madison Urban Ministry, Girl Scouts, Wisconsin Public Radio, and many more. Her full obituary can be found [here](#).

Contributions

Our work is supported by financial contributions beyond membership dues. Thank you to these members (bold) and nonmember supporters who donated in November and December 2020.

Mary Bean Memorial

Lucy & Jacob Altwegg

Sally & Edward Gleason

Geralyn Hawkins

Carol Kiemel

Patricia Kippert

Joan Lundin

Kathleen Schuster

Eric Selje

Miriam Simmons

Other Memorials

Christine Clements in memory of Cathleen Clements

Making Democracy Work

Mary Anglim

Karen Bassler

Deanna Grahn

Mitch Horacek

Matthew Isaac

Janet & Michael Kane

Mary & Donald Metz

Marta Meyers

Margaret O'Donoghue

Karen Peterson

Rebecca Tradewell

David Nelson

Brook Soltvedt

Grants

All Voting Is Local

General or Other Donations

Johanna Alex

Renee Bauer

Carlene Bechen

Kerri Benecke

John Boyer

Vivian Chappell

Scott Diehl

Christopher Dolan

Susan Dottl

Kelly Eakin

Jennifer Gaber

Martha Girdaukas

Sally Gleason

Susan Gruber

Georgia Kaftan

Janet & Michael Kane

Maureen Kind

Patricia Kippert

Mary Kunkel

Merilyn Kupferberg

Florence Lederman

Madelyn Leopold

Marla Maeder

Candace & Mark Moody

Kate Morand

Judith Munger

Barbara Olson

Kerri Olson

Nancy Pekar

K Peterson

Claudia Pogreba

Peggy Smelser

Dejen Tesfagiorgis

William Thomas

Jan Tymorek

Ann Waidelich

Dan Walker

Laurie Zimmerman

Anonymous

Discussion Units

Many League members meet in one of six units to discuss the topic of each forum, using the study materials provided by the program planners to guide the conversation. Each discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Units meet regularly at different times and locations (all are in Madison unless otherwise noted). Find a unit meeting that's convenient for you and participate! Visit this [web page](#) for more information.

During the pandemic, all unit meetings will be held virtually. If you are new to a unit, please let the host know that you plan to attend so they can send you a link to the Zoom meeting.

Please consult the [calendar](#) for details about specific meetings.

Unit: Prairie Ridge (Oakwood Village). *This group is open to Prairie Ridge residents only.*

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

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

Unit: West / Middleton

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

Leader: [Merilyn Kupferberg](#) (608-831-3267) and [Gloria Meyer](#) (608-288-8160)

Unit: Central West

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

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

Unit: Northeast Side

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

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

Unit: Downtown Dinner

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

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

Unit: Campus

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

Leader: [Laura Grueneberg](#) (502-235-0023)

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Feb. 9 | Public Issues Forum, 7 p.m. |
| Feb. 10 | Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 18 | Public Issues Forum, 7 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | Info-Session on Alt. Voting, 4 p.m. |
| Feb. 28 | Info-Session on Alt. Voting, 4 p.m. |
| Mar. 7 | Info-Session on Alt. Voting, 4 p.m. |
| Mar. 9 | Public Issues Forum, 7 p.m. |
| Mar. 10 | Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. |
| Mar. 14 | Info-Session on Alt. Voting, 4 p.m. |

2021 Elections

- Spring Primary Election – Tuesday, Feb. 16
Spring Election – Tuesday, Apr. 6

