



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday, 9–1

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President's Message

Voter Registration, Budgeting, and Fair Voting Maps

At this writing, many members are gearing up for voter registration/information events. In addition to our regular “gigs” at farmers’ markets and the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, we will be assisting new citizens at the first naturalization ceremony to be held in Madison in many years, and providing registration assistance at the Waunakee Community Fair. On National Voter Registration Day, September 26th, we have drives planned at Spectrum Brands and UW Health, and many members will be heeding the call from the Madison Clerk for Voter Education Ambassadors to staff voter outreach tables at locations around the city. We are

also calling for senior center liaisons to renew their efforts to ensure that seniors have current information about online voter registration and voter ID requirements. And we’ve had great news that our partner Inspire US will be hiring a full-time staff person in Wisconsin to organize voter registration in high schools. Visit our [Voter Service page](#) for more information and a calendar of tabling opportunities, maintained by the Dane County Voter ID Coalition.

This is also the season when local governments are budgeting, and when citizens should take the opportunity to contact their village board members, city alders, and Dane County supervisors about their values and priorities. Take advantage of listening sessions to speak your mind, but also to hear what others in your community have to say. Hold your elected officials accountable! Remember, though, do *not* make statements or comments in the name of the League unless your statement has been approved by our executive committee! These links to budgeting documents may be useful: [City of Fitchburg schedule](#), [City of Fitchburg presentation on the process](#), [City of Madison](#), [City of Middleton](#), [City of Sun Prairie](#), [City of Monona](#), [City of Verona](#), [Dane County](#).

The US Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in *Gill v Whitford*, otherwise known as the Wisconsin partisan gerrymander case, on October 3rd. [The Brennan Center for Justice has reviewed the amicus briefs](#) filed in the case and finds broad *bipartisan* support for blocking extreme gerrymandering because of the threat it presents to the very foundation of our democratic process. Our March 7th forum will provide an update on fair voting maps.

Thank you all for your engagement with League and the democratic process. You show your support in many ways, from sharing our events to your friends on Facebook and Twitter, attending forums, assisting voters, making your opinions known to elected officials, becoming educated on our positions, contributing your time on the board, assisting in the office, and contributing money for the materials we need to do our work. We appreciate it!

Brook Soltvedt, soltvedtbrook@gmail.com, 608.274.5184



More than 100 people attended our first issues forum of the year: Understanding Rural Dane County. If you missed the event, visit [the forum page](#), where you can find video and audio recordings, along with the study materials, the speakers' slides, and a link to a Badger Herald article covering the event.

Understanding Rural Dane County

Mike Casey, jmcasey222@aol.com

More than 100 people turned out for the first Issues Forum of the fall. Dane County Board Supervisor Nikki Jones (District 29), Oregon School District Board Member Barb Feeney, and Dane County Towns Association Attorney Mark Hazelbaker provided a series of thoughtful observations and recommendations on how we (urban dwellers) and they (rural residents) value the areas in which we live, how we are quite dependent upon each other, and the need to communicate more often and more effectively to build the futures we all want for ourselves and the generations beyond.

Nikki Jones said the three most important issues facing folks in the rural communities in which she was raised and which she now represents were (1) healthy communities, (2) transportation, and (3) land use. Noting that Dane County is seeing the greatest growth among all counties in Wisconsin—adding a community the size of Cottage Grove each year over the past several years—the push/pull between development and the ability to preserve the communities in which many her constituents reside is critical to families who would like to “age in place.” Senior centers and schools are core institutions in each community that are important to stabilize. Jones cited the importance of innovative programs such as Building Bridges, a county program to provide school-age children with mental health services. [Partnerships between urban and rural school districts have allowed Building Bridges to operate more efficiently across the county.](#) In her list of needs for healthy rural communities, broadband technology is close to the top. Today broadband is required to farm effectively, support business communities, and stay in touch with family members spread around the nation and the world.

Highway improvements are also BIG for rural communities, required to get agricultural products to market and families to jobs, schools, and other destinations critical to their success. Noting that highway

expenditures have increased from approximately \$3 million 15 years ago to more than \$19 million this past year, the need continues to rise with growing economic activity. Jones reminded attendees that land use is extremely important for families who have been in Dane County for generations. “While the whole is greater than the parts, the competing issues are extremely relevant for today and into the future.” Among those competing issues are (a) supporting smart growth, (b) preserving agriculture, (c) developing economies of scale, and (d) balancing environmentally protected lands.

Barb Feeney opened with the observation that “we’ve lost a sense of shared purpose and shared identity” between rural and urban areas, particularly in northern portions of Wisconsin. “Geography should not be a community’s or its children’s destiny.” Noting the poverty in most rural areas (more than 40% of the children in northern Wisconsin counties qualify for free and reduced lunches), Feeney reminded the audience that Oregon and Dane County are not typical of the state. Pointing to poverty, reduction in enrollments (two-thirds of the state’s school systems have dwindling enrollments), and greater expenses for bus transportation, Feeney said it is not surprising that many rural residents are frustrated and fear their school districts will not survive over the longer term. There are “a lot of reasons for people to feel resentment over where we’re headed.”

Mark Hazelbaker took attendees back to the late 1970s when the Farmland Preservation System was established to control growth and development, particularly on agricultural lands. In Dane County, development was highly regulated—for example, those who wanted to build a single-family home beyond the urban areas were required to have a minimum of 35 acres. Put simply, “people are smart.” Those who wanted inexpensive housing in the country built in counties contiguous to Dane, and rural growth changed. Growth in the towns of adjacent counties shot up; growth in Dane County’s towns decreased steadily, to about 3.9% from 2000–2006. While Dane County avoided sprawl and the loss of valuable farmland to bad development in its rural areas, there were unintended consequences. A large population that works in Dane County, plays in Dane County, and often goes to school in Dane County doesn’t live in Dane County. Their “home” communities and Dane County both experience increased demands on transportation and many other systems because of this geographic disparity.

Hazelbaker also argued that, because farmers now produce so much more per acre than they could in the 1970s, continuing to devote the same amount of land to agriculture is not the best use of the land. He would like to see urban and rural communities work together to address how to really use the land and other public resources for the good of the overall community. His solution: an umbrella regional organization (similar to the Metro Council for Minnesota’s Twin Cities) that allows local control over strictly local matters, but has decision-making authority over significant regional matters, such as land use, transportation, affordable housing, and public health. Hazelbaker argues that the way we are using our urban and rural lands is increasing economic inequality in Dane County. Changes are needed to optimize our future, economically and socially. “We can do better” because our rural areas contribute a lot of economic value, and we should all be working together to enhance those opportunities.

The League of Women Voters of Dane County will be taking a portion of this discussion to a deeper level in its Issues Forum next month (October 4th)—[The Crisis in Wisconsin’s K-12 Education Funding](#). Please join us!



Hazelbaker, Feeney, and Jones answered questions from the audience following their presentations.

138 to Go

Mary Anglim, Membership Chair,
membership@lwvdanecounty.org

Join / Renew

As of early September, about 200 of our members had renewed their membership for 2017–2018. How about you? If you aren't sure whether you renewed, it's easy to find out—just email me or our office (office@lwvdanecounty.org). We'll check and let you know.

Renewing online with a credit card is easy. Just click the [Join/Renew](#) button on our website and renew and pay online, or print the form and mail it with your check. Act now!

Thanks!

Great Decisions

Are you interested in foreign policy issues, but feel that it's all too confusing to understand? For many years our League had a group that participated in [Great Decisions: America's Global Affairs Discussion Program](#). Each year, The Foreign Policy Association selects eight serious issues impacting the world. They provide a briefing book, DVDs, and other program materials for groups to discuss the issues in small groups.

Topics for 2018 are:

- The waning of Pax Americana?
- Russia's foreign policy
- China and America: the new geopolitical equation
- Media and foreign policy
- Turkey: a partner in crisis
- U.S. global engagement and the military
- South Africa's fragile democracy
- Global health: progress and challenges



To learn more, watch this video about Great Decisions

As member interest dwindled and priorities shifted for the organizers, the LWVDC Great Decision's program ended. If you think it's time to revive Great Decisions and you are willing to organize a group in our league, please email office@lwvdanecounty.org. We'll do what we can to advise and assist.

[Check our website](#) for current action alerts from national, state, and our own League. And [get the Voices call to action app](#) for your phone.



The Power of Partnerships

Brook Soltvedt, soltvedtbrook@gmail.com 608.274.5184

Whether in our social, romantic, business, or community lives, our choice of partners can go a long way in determining our success. The League is fortunate to work with many partner organizations. *Disclaimer:* this list is by no means a comprehensive accounting. My intention is to give our members a sense of who we work with and why.

Our office tenants: [The Madison Institute](#) and [Physicians for Social Responsibility](#) have long sublet space in our office and storeroom. We regularly cosponsor events with The Madison Institute.



The [Dane County Voter ID Coalition](#): LWVDC and the [NAACP, Dane County Branch](#) are the leads, but [South Central Federation of Labor](#), [Rotary Club of West Towne-Middleton](#), [YWCA Madison](#), [Urban League of Greater Madison](#), and the [ACLU](#) are partners.



[Common Cause in Wisconsin](#), in partnership with LWV of Wisconsin, designed comprehensive flyers on voter ID that our volunteers use with general, senior, and Spanish-speaking voters. Executive Director Jay Heck has been a frequent speaker at both state and county league events. And on October 24th we are cosponsoring CCW's public hearing on judicial recusal rules—[Access to Justice](#).



We have many partners in government: [City of Madison Clerk](#) Maribeth Witzel-Behl, who trains [Voter Education Ambassadors](#), established early voting sites around the city, and works tirelessly to ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to vote; [Dane County Clerk](#) Scott McDonell, whose office provides funds for voter ID education and assistance; school district employees, municipal clerks around the county, and the Dane County Clerk's office, who provide information for *Candidates' Answers*; Madison City Channel staff, who record and broadcast [Know Your Candidates](#) and many of our issues forums; local elected officials who work with the League to effect legislation and programs consistent with our positions; librarians where we sponsor voting events; and staff at the [Wisconsin Elections Commission](#).

We hold voter registration/information events in partnership with businesses such as Epic, Spectrum Brands, and UW Health; agencies such as St. Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry, senior centers, and senior living complexes; and UW organizations such as [Associated Students of Madison](#) and the [Morgridge Center for Public Service](#). Capitol Lakes Retirement Center hosts our forums. [Isthmus Publishing](#) partners with us to publish *Candidates' Answers*.



LWVDC shares an umbrella with some of its partners. Under [LWV Wisconsin's](#) umbrella, we partner with other Wisconsin leagues and interleague organizations to share ideas, publications, expertise, and events. LWVWI also shares a few umbrellas, with [LWV US](#), with [Wisconsin Voices](#), and with [Community Shares of Wisconsin](#) and its [Center for Change](#).

We appreciate and value our many partners. And we invite *you* to contribute your time, ideas, hard work, and money to help us remain a valued partner in our community.

2017 Carrie Chapman Catt Award



Kathy Fullin presented Shirley Haidinger with the Carrie Chapman Catt award

You might say she was shocked!

At our 2017 Annual Meeting, Co-President Kathleen Fullin read the following in announcing **Shirley Haidinger** the recipient of the 2017 Carrie Chapman Catt award.

Our 2017 Carrie Chapman Catt award winner got interested in voting issues around the time she retired from a long career in state service in Wisconsin government.

Shirley Haidinger began her state career at the University of Wisconsin dealing with keypunch computer cards. She moved to the Department of Justice Crime Information Bureau working with data. She finished her career at the Department of Natural Resources, where she managed air quality data for more than twenty years.

Shirley met Paul Malischke in the early 2000's, and started working with him on voting issues. After she retired in 2006, she worked in a small group with Paul helping with student registration at the UW-Madison. She gradually took on more voter registration projects.

Shirley has done regular voter outreach at the Downtown Farmers Market and the Dane County Job Center on Aberg Avenue. She worked as part of the League team at the Student Activity Center on campus for the November election, where we registered hundreds of voters. She has been part of registration events that our league organized at Madison College during the last decade.

My favorite stories about Shirley are the outreach opportunities she developed in her neighborhood. The most unusual was probably her outreach at Pierce Liquors.

She creatively worked with management of the new apartment complexes on East Washington Ave to organize multiple sessions in which she registered dozens of residents, even persuading the management to email the residents to alert them to the opportunity to register to vote.

When management became less open to that process, she moved her efforts to Festival Foods, and contacted the new residents as they shopped at their local grocery.

In totaling up reports submitted by Shirley in the last year, which include registrations at events she organized, we came up with 557 voter registrations. And that does not include the dozens of voters Shirley registered at Epic in the last year, or the registrations that were part of her efforts during In Person Absentee Voting at the UW-Madison or libraries.

All of this work was done with extraordinary thoroughness and accuracy. One time out at Epic, I was checking forms, and finally found one minor omission on a form that Shirley had witnessed. The Epic staffer was quite amused at my glee at finally finding one minor problem Shirley had to correct.

I am delighted to present the Carrie Chapman Catt award to Shirley Haidinger.

Please notify our office if your name, mailing address, or email address changes. It will save us postal charges and ensure you are kept informed about League activities. Thank you!

Thank You, Volunteers!

From stuffing envelopes to organizing name tags and other supplies for forums, our office volunteers help us serve you. These members assisted in August. If you'd like to help, email office@lwvdanecounty.org.

**Mary Conroy
JoAnn Elder
Jan Van Vleck**

Welcome, New Members!

Joining us in August, 2017, are:

Christine Clements	Linnea Pak
Marlene Fiske	Deb Ross
Emily Jones	Joan Schwarz

Contributions

The following people contributed to our League (beyond membership dues) in August. Our donors keep our work going! Thank you!

Candidates Answers

Margaret Peterson Coluccy

General Donations

Anonymous

**Mary T. Anglim
Marlene Fiske
Mary Ann Fix
Alice J. Kissling
Doug Knudson
Patricia A. Kippert**

**Caroline R. Liedtke
Sara H. Markham
Gloria K. Meyer
Patricia K. Watson
Dorothy C. Wheeler**

Unit Meetings

Unit Coordinator, Diane Martin Liebert, dwliefert@gmail.com, 608.698.4143

League members meet monthly in one of four units to discuss the topic of that month's Issues Forum, using study materials provided by the program planners. The discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

Third Monday West/Middleton

October 16, 6:00 pm

Gardd Parc Community Room
6767 Frank L. Wright Ave., Middleton
Priscilla Thain, 233-5578, priscillathain@gmail.com
Barbara Mortensen, 233-7563, barbaramort@charter.net

Third Tuesday Oakwood West

October 17, 12:45 pm

B39 The Oaks, 6205 Mineral Point Rd., Madison
Park on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Ramp
Nancy Simonsen, 230-3014, njsimonsen@gmail.com
Kathy Johnson, 238-1785, kjohnson44@ameritech.net

Third Wednesday Northeast Side

October 18, 3:30 pm

Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave., Madison
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net

Third Wednesday Downtown Dinner

October 18, 5:15 pm

Capitol Lakes Retirement Center private dining room
333 West Main St., Madison; Free parking in ramp
Ingrid Rothe, 556-3174, irothe@ssc.wisc.edu

Highway Cleanup Project

Interested in joining the League crew removing trash in our assigned area along US Highway 14 just west of Middleton? Please contact project coordinator **Doug Johnson**, 608.238.1785, djohnson44@ameritech.net.

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

7:00–8:30 pm

The Crisis in Wisconsin K-12 Education Funding

Jeff Pertl Senior Policy Advisor, Department of Public Instruction,
and Dane County Board Supervisor, District 17

Julie Mead Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy
Administration, UW-Madison School of Education

Heather DuBois Bourinane Executive Director, Wisconsin Public Education Network

The Capitol Lakes Grand Hall, 333 West Main St., Madison

(Free parking in the ramp across the street)

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 28 [**Partisan Gerrymanders and the US Constitution**](#),
6:00 pm (Pyle Center)
- Oct. 02 Book discussion *Politics of Resentment*, 2:00 pm
(League conference room)
- Oct. 03 Book discussion *Politics of Resentment*, 10:00 am
(Hawthorne Library)
- Oct. 04 Issues Forum, 7:00 pm (Capitol Lakes)
[**The Crisis in Wisconsin K-12 Education Funding**](#)
- Oct. 11 LWVDC Board Meeting, 2:30 pm
- Oct. 24 [**Access to Justice**](#), public hearing on judicial recusal,
6:30 pm (Capitol Lakes)
- Nov. 01 Issues Forum, 7:00 pm (Capitol Lakes)
[**Sustainability: A Framework of Support for Present
and Future Generations**](#)
- Nov. 08 LWVDC Board Meeting, 2:30 pm
- Dec. 13 LWVDC Board Meeting, 2:30 pm

Officers

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Encouraging informed and active participation in government since 1920.