

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
FEBRUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER**

Calendar of Events

02/10	GD: Climate Change and the Global Order
02/17	GD: Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
02/18	Vote: Primary Election
02/20	Poverty and Housing in Manitowoc County
02/24	GD: Artificial Intelligence & Data
03/02	GD: The Philippines & the U.S.
03/03	Board Meeting
03/05	Candidates Forum: Manitowoc
03/09	India & Pakistan
03/16	GD: Red Sea Security
03/19	Candidates Forum: Two Rivers
03/23	GD: China's Road into Latin America

Dear League Members,

The first Great Decisions program is behind us. It was a huge success. We had over 150 people in attendance. It was so good to see old and new friends attending this series. Alise Coen was our presenter that evening and was very knowledgeable on the Northern Triangle of Central America. The next topic is on Climate change. This subject has become one of the defining issues of our time. All Great Decisions presentations are held at the Manitowoc Public Library at 6:00 pm in the Balkansky Room located on the second floor. Elevators are available and it is open to the public. Bring a friend and be enlightened for the next seven weeks.

There are many events planned for the rest of the year. Along with Great Decisions, there will be a panel discussion on Housing in Manitowoc County, and two forums will be presented in March. Please read the rest of the Newsletter for details on these coming events.

The Board would like to thank all of you for your continued support.

Cathy

POVERTY AND HOUSING IN MANITOWOC COUNTY

The League will be hosting a Forum on Poverty & Housing at Manitowoc City Hall on **Thursday, February 20th, 2020 at 7:00 PM**. This event is free and open to the general public. We encourage lawmakers and community representatives at all levels to attend, as well as those impacted by our lack of low income housing. An industry expert will address the current state of low income housing in Manitowoc, and will explore what it would take to have enough housing to meet the need. We will look at how similar issues have been addressed successfully in other communities. We will advise on the different types of housing, as well as what is currently available and what the wait lists look like. We will then discuss the launch of the 2021 League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County Poverty & Housing Study.

What: Forum on Poverty & Housing in Manitowoc
Where: Manitowoc City Hall Council Chambers (900 Quay Street, Manitowoc)
When: Thursday, February 20th from 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Why: Launch the League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County Poverty & Housing Study

Light refreshments will be provided.

POVERTY STUDY UPDATE

We completed our study on “Poverty and Addiction in Manitowoc County” and distributed 240 studies in the community. Printing of this publication was possible through a grant from the West Foundation and the generosity of John and Kate Miller. We have about 20 copies left. Currently, members of the committee are meeting with the Superintendents of the schools in the county to share our 6 recommendations for public schools that were a part of our concurrence statements.

A committee has been formed to study the low-income housing issues in the county which was identified as another component of our Poverty study. This will be our focus for the next year. **The League October 20th meeting described in this newsletter will be a discussion of the housing issue.**

Members of the Housing committee include Theresa Collins, Erica Strauss, Julie Grinde, Nancy Slattery and Cecilia Held. We would like to have at least 2 more

people on this committee. Please contact Theresa at Beacon Consulting if you are interested in this issue of importance in our community.

GREAT DECISIONS

02/10 Climate Change and the Global Order; Pablo Toral, PhD, Beloit College

02/17 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking; Beth Dougherty, PhD, Beloit College

02/24 Artificial Intelligence and Data; Matthew Friedel, UW Milwaukee

03/02 The Philippines and the U.S.; John Katzka, Retired Diplomat

03/09 India and Pakistan; Peter Kranstover, Retired USAID

03/16 Red Sea Security; Daniel c. Stoll, PhD., St. Norbert College

03/23 China's Road into Latin America; Martin Farrell, PhD, Ripon College, Retired

Some of the League members have dinner at 4:30 pm at the Courthouse Pub with the presenters. If you wish to meet them before their program begins, contact Marilyn Sontag at 682-8988 for further details. The Great Decisions booklets are available at the front desk of the library for \$15.00. It is a great value and gives background information on each topic.

PRIMARY ELECTION

On February 18th, primaries will be open. For the members of League who live in Two Rivers, all voting will be held at the Two Rivers City Hall. For the April Primaries, the voting will be held at your usual voting places.

This is the 100th Anniversary of Women receiving the right to vote in this country. Please honor your rights and duty to vote in every election. Your vote does matter!!

CANDIDATE FORUMS

We are holding a forum for Manitowoc County Board candidates on Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Manitowoc City Hall. This is an

earlier start than usual because there are five contested County Board seats which means there will be 10 candidates to answer questions.

There will also be a forum for Two Rivers City Council candidates on Thursday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Two Rivers City Hall.

We will be taking questions from the floor.

LWV-Environment Committee Report

Manitowoc County Earth Care Team:

LWV-Manitowoc County, Lakeshore UU Fellowship, Grace Congregational (UCC)
Manitowoc County Earth Care Team is a diverse group focusing on positive actions to combat the effects of climate change and environmental issues that impact the earth.

Members : Angela Zar, Anita Rappe, Darlene Wellner, Bev Rawling, Sandy Bast, Bonnita Budysz, Susie & Jim Miller, Nancy Lodl, Shelly Welch, Robert Theaker, Marilyn Sontag.

Upcoming Earth Day Events for 2020

April 17th & 18th

Speaker on Climate Change Friday Afternoon, April 17th

Sponsored by: Lincoln HS Green Club & the Earth Care Team

Speaker: Nick Miller, Science Director & Strategist for Nature Conservancy.

Speaker on Climate Change Saturday Morning, April 18th

Followed by a Rally/march

Sponsored by: Manitowoc County Earth Care Team

Speaker: Nick Miller, Science Director & Strategist for Nature Conservancy.

More information about both of these events will be available in next month's newsletter

For questions or meeting dates please contact

Bev Rawling at 920-693-8941 or circleofsong@tds.net

League of Women Voters Observation Corps

Our local League Observer Corps is now in action. Below I have listed some of our guiding principles. Our members listed here are observing different government meetings and will be using the information collected to inform

our members as well as the general public on what is happening in our local government. Currently Mary Wallace, and Sue Matczynski will be taking turns observing the Two Rivers City Council; Linda Gratz will be observing the Manitowoc School Board; Cathy Cole will be observing the Two Rivers School Board; Darlene Wellner and Linda Gratz will be observing the Manitowoc County Board; Theresa Collins and Erica Strauss will be observing the Manitowoc Common Council; Ceil Held will be observing the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; and Ceil Held and Erica Strauss will be observing the Human Services Board. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact any of these members. Thanks so much, Linda Gratz Observer Corps Coordinator

Purpose:

Mission: Informed and active participation of citizens in government, increased understanding of major public policy issues, and influencing public policy through education and advocacy is an important part of many organizations. An Observer Corps helps meet that mission. By regularly attending public meetings of local governmental agencies, the Observer Corps' members keep elected officials aware of the organization's interest in local government and helps all the organization's members and the general public be better informed citizens through the reports on those meetings.

Current local Situation:

Currently our community doesn't have the reporting on local government that was standard several years ago. The newspaper and radio staff that formerly covered local government have been reduced in numbers and cannot provide information to the public in an on-going consistent manner. We are hoping that by implementing an Observer Corp and sharing this information through the media we can once again allow for transparency of local governmental decision making and accountability.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen communication between the organization and local government bodies, including county commissions, city councils, city commissions, township trustees, boards of education, planning commissions, and other boards responsible for a single functional area such as transit, health or parks.

2. Encourage individual members to become better informed regarding the decision-making process in local government.
3. Gather information and identify problems, issues, and trends in the community so as to enable the organization to assess its relationship and importance to current and future organizational programs.
4. Increase the visibility and enhance the image of the organization among elected and appointed officials, community leaders, and those persons responsible for effective delivery of services by public agencies.
5. Encourage better government through the observers' presence at meetings.
6. Share information with the organization's members and the public about issues that may affect communities in the area.

Process:

League members will volunteer to cover local governmental meetings. They will attempt to cover County Board, School Board and local Common Council meetings. The League will send a letter to the governmental bodies regarding this undertaking and who will be covering their meetings along with contact information. The League member will attend meetings and will complete the observational form which will be handed in to the League Coordinator who will determine the follow up needed. Follow up might include a formal response from the League Board of Directors based on League positions, and/or reporting out to members and the public information that has been gathered. The League hopes to work with local media staff to help disseminate information to the community members.