



OUR MISSION: *Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*

December 1, 2024

Due to a rash of falsified emails using League member names– remember to never click on anything suspicious, and the League will never request gift cards or money via email!



Barbara McAfee to be Keynote for Winter Gathering – January 12, 2025

We are thrilled that Barbara McAfee has agreed to be the keynote for our annual Winter Gathering on Sunday, January 12, 2025, 2:00 to 5:00 at the Amery Community Center (Doors open at 1:30).

Barbara is a voice coach, author, singer/songwriter, song leader and key-note speaker who uses music and words to inspire and connect people. She is the author of: *Full Voice: The Art and Practice of Vocal Presence*.

For those of you who don't know this St. Croix Valley force of nature, you can visit her website at www.barbaramcafee.com to learn more. Listen to her TED talk or sample some of her music.

But first, put the Winter Gathering on your calendar for the new year. Invite friends who might be interested in the League to join you. And come prepared to renew connections with our League community, learn about LWV St. Croix Valley's plans for 2025, and join together to share the uplifting power of music.

Irene, Beth and Kris



Treasurer's Report: Barb Katt, Katrina Larson, Nancy Stewart met with Kate Manecke on 11/21 to conduct the annual financial review of the books as required by the bylaws. Spot checks of receipts, deposits, PayPal, and bank statements from the fiscal

year 2023-24 found that the books are in great shape. A big thank you to Kate Manecke for keeping such good records!

Tax Planning and RMDs

For those of you who have reached the age at which you are required to withdraw funds from your IRA account, please keep the League of Women Voters St Croix Valley in mind. The Required Minimum Distribution, RMD, can be sent directly from an IRA account to a qualified non-profit, such as the League, without incurring any tax obligations. Check with your tax advisor for details.



Hello to you all!

Please welcome our newest members!

Alyson Sauter, Hudson
Nancy Ulrich, New Richmond
Melissa Karl, Baldwin

Please find an updated Member List attached to this Newsletter.

Feel free to call with any Member Services questions!
Forward we go!

Member Services
Kathy Streitz
612-916-8856



Voters Services: What's on your calendar?

As we turn the page on 2024 and look ahead to next year, we wish to say how very grateful we are to be part of a movement to engage and inform our communities and defend and fight for human rights and civility.

We'd love to hear your ideas on how best to disseminate news of our upcoming elections.

FYI

On February 18, 2025, Wisconsin will hold non-partisan primaries for statewide and local elections. Those who advance will then face off in an April 1 general election.

Here are some of the key 2025 races.

Wisconsin Supreme Court

So far, two candidates have announced they will run for the seat: Brad Schimel, a former Wisconsin attorney general who is now a judge on the Waukesha County Circuit Court, and Dane County Circuit Court Judge Susan Crawford.

Court of Appeals Judge Maria Lazar, has said she is also considering a run in the nonpartisan primary.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction Jill Underly, a former teacher and school principal, is running for a second four-year term as the state's top education official. Jeff Wright, the superintendent of the Sauk Prairie School District, is her first announced challenger.

Court of Appeals and Circuit Courts

At least three seats on the Wisconsin Court of Appeals (District II, III and IV) will be on the ballot in April 2025. The three-county area of LWVSCV falls under District III where currently Judge Lisa Stark presides.

Many of the state's 261 circuit court judges will also be on the ballot.

As of now, St Croix County Circuit Court (Branch II) Edward F. Vlack III, is retiring and his seat on the bench will be open.

Local governments

Several localities will choose leaders.



An Opportunity for 'Wonks'!

Nonprofit VOTE <<http://nonprofitvote.org>> is extending an invitation to dig deeper on the outcome of the general election. If you register and can't or don't attend you will be emailed a link to watch the presentation after the fact.

Nonprofit VOTE writes -

As winners and losers continue to be projected, the data behind the vote will continue to write the story of this election and what it means for nonprofits in the voter engagement space.

And who better to help us understand that story than Prof. Michael McDonald at the University of Florida Election Lab in our upcoming webinar "The Final 2024 Countdown" on December 11 at 2 pm ET.

If you haven't heard of McDonald, believe us when we say he's a BIG DEAL. Perhaps the nation's foremost expert on how votes are counted, McDonald is frequently called upon by cable news networks and political pundits seeking to understand the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, HOW, and WHY behind America's votes.

Register to join the Zoom - Election 2024 Voter Turnout

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3817304782103/WN_efS_5gofT7ahSFHVUaKtpw?link_id=1&can_id=72745610929a1fb1d6eb7e29de1d0ef3&source=email-so-about-election-day&email_referrer=email_2536385&email_subject=and-the-final-vote-count-is#/registration

What are you eating these days?

The news and books we read, the tv we watch, the places we go and the people we meet with are sources of nourishment for our psyches and souls. Please feed yourselves well, read labels and try to maintain a healthy balance. Are you looking for some new choices? Here's some to try -

Americans of Conscience (americansofconscience.com) supportive resources

SubStack (on.substack.com) myriad of writers on many topics

The Guardian (theguardian.com) independent journalism

Barn Raiser (barnraisingmedia.com) Independent source for rural and small town news.

What would you recommend?

Send your book/podcast/artist/poet/music or media reference to Kris (aksurbaugh@gmail.com) and write a quick review why you enjoy it. We will get it in the next newsletter!



COFFEE COMMENTS

On November 20 and 21, many League members answered the call for a coffee session to share thoughts and feelings after the Presidential Election. One was held at the St. Croix Falls Library. The other was at the Somerset Library. Not surprising, all had a lot to say and hopefully, it was a positive way to soothe emotions after a very important and impactful election.

It also gave us a chance to thank a number of Board Members who attended. We are appreciative of and thankful for all that our leadership team did to direct our efforts in getting out the vote. In that, we can say we accomplished our mission. We also had good success in convincing the public that elections are fair. What we didn't anticipate—or have control of—was the great amount of disinformation, voter suppression, and citizens who stayed home despite efforts to get them to vote.

One concern expressed by members was our messaging on the VOTE NO amendment. Some members felt that the state league was slow in alerting us to it being on the ballot and that the contradiction between our non-partisan stance and speaking out on this issue was a problem. We hope the LWV-WI is better able to direct us next time.

Members discussed the need to find good sources of information. New sources are being explored that provide accurate news coverage. Some folks mentioned accessing BlueSky rather than X.

Other topics discussed were how each member manages self-care, and what actions we might take as we move forward. We will continue to explore these topics at future opportunities.

It felt great to be together and it was a chance to find hope. In conclusion:

- Keep what is happening in perspective.
- There will be many lawsuits that will challenge actions that we are concerned about.
- The wealthy will soon realize they need immigrants and poorer people to do their work.
- Our government still has checks and balances remaining.

Overall perception: Many of us are disappointed, but hopeful. We need to keep striving to protect our democracy and be mindful of efforts to destroy it (as reported by Kay Brooks)

Join LWV on Dec. 3 for a Free ERA Documentary Screening

"Ratified" is a new documentary on the fight for and status of the ERA and the story of Virginia's ratification. LWVUS is working hard to build national public pressure on President Biden to ensure that the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is published before he leaves office. With a quick turnaround to match the urgency of this moment, we're inviting League leaders to a free, virtual screening of "Ratified" on Tuesday, December 3 at 4pm ET. The screening will be followed by a 20-minute panel discussion to help us all find ways to engage as Leagues and individuals. **League leaders can find registration information here.** For questions, please contact Rebecca Goldman at rgoldman@lww.org.

LEADERSHIP TEAM 2024-2025

Beth Wood – Co-President <bwood@frontiernet.net>
 Irene Bugge – Co-President <irenebugge@gmail.com>
 Kris Surbaugh – Vice-President <aksurbaugh@gmail.com>
 Evanne Hunt – Secretary <evanne.hunt@outlook.com>
 Kate Manecke – Treasurer <deleinen@icloud.com>
 Edna Early – Director (DEI) <ed5early@gmail.com>
 Barb Katt – Director (DEI) <barbkatt@hotmail.com>
 Rita Kearns – Director (Voter Services) <ritakearns54@gmail.com>
 Patty Van Nevel – Director (Voter Services) <pattyvannevel@gmail.com>
 Kathy Streitz – Membership <kfstreitz@gmail.com>
 Nancy Stewart – Budget <n.stewart@yahoo.com>
 Tami Halcomb – Roster Manager <thalcomb@lwwstcroixvalley.org>

December	1	Newsletter
	15	Newsletter
	17	<p>Board Meeting (Zoom) General Membership attend (Zoom) 5PM https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89574385909?pwd=oWLUKuX3HovGAbmSosu7C6tSBqRdw6m.1</p>

January 2025	1	Happy New Year! Newsletter
	12	Winter Gathering at Amery Community Center (doors open at 1:30)
	19	Snow Date for Winter Gathering
February	14	LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS 105 YEARS AND GOING STRONG TOGETHER!



The biggest bang for your buck!

Did you know that simply making a phone call to your area representative has an important impact on how our government is run?

Expressing your concern as a constituent is a great way to get ‘on the record’ for important government decisions.

Each contact from a constituent is recorded and weighs in on the representatives record.

Nervous about calling? Practice makes perfect:

- Have notes handy of what you want to say.
- Practice with a friend

Find contact information at:

My Vote.Gov (myvote.wi.gov/en-us)

Or USA.Gov (<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials/>)

Want more coaching details? Check out this page from the Wisconsin Library Association which also gives instructions on writing or meeting your legislators:

(<http://www.wisconsinlibraries.org/call-your-legislators>)

Tip: Add your representative’s name and contact information to your phone for ready reference!