



Dear Friends in League,  
Spring--and Spring Elections--are just around the corner! Be sure to check out the Upcoming Events!

On Saturday, February 11, the Leagues of Women Voters of Janesville and Beloit held their "Forward Together" Celebration as an online event. Rock County Circuit Court Judge Ashley Morse gave us an excellent and thoughtful presentation on the need for trauma-informed care for youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Her talk received good coverage in the Janesville and Beloit newspapers, and if you missed the event, you can watch the recording of her talk on our League's website, [lwvjvl.org](http://lwvjvl.org)

This mid-February event began as a "celebration of women" and was held near the birthday of pioneer suffragist Susan B. Anthony. It had been held as a brunch or luncheon for several years up through 2020 when we celebrated the double centennial of the

League of Women Voters (February 14, 1920) and of the final ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (August 18, 1920) that assured women of the right to vote. With that centennial, the Leagues decided to make the event more of a celebration and rededication to the mission of the League of Women Voters: "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy."

The COVID-19 pandemic, the threat of a "triple-demic" this winter (Flu, RSV, and COVID), and the risks inherent in scheduling events for February in Wisconsin, pushed the planning committee to hold the event online for the past three years.

Janesville will be the host League for the 2024 "Forward Together" Celebration. The planning committee is inviting League members to give us your suggestions for how—and when--we should celebrate and socialize with our friends and supporters, and rededicate ourselves to the League's mission.

Please respond to the questionnaire at :

<https://forms.gle/YnnDFii84oG3VTa2A>

We look forward to getting your thoughtful ideas!

Linda

## The Third Annual Earth Week Forum April 20th

The League of Women Voters of Janesville will hold its third Annual Earth Week Forum on Thursday, April 20, 2023 from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. The theme for our virtual forum this year is Community Sustainability. Panelists will include local leaders in the areas of business, city government, county, and state government, K-12 schools, and colleges. The discussion will hopefully better help residents understand why community planning today needs to be done using sustainability and equity as objectives. The conversation will help inform local leaders and residents

as to what others are doing around the state to thrive while building resilience. Going well beyond defining sustainability, the forum will provide pathways forward for action.



## What's Inside this Issue



Forward Together  
Voter Service

Page 2  
Page 3

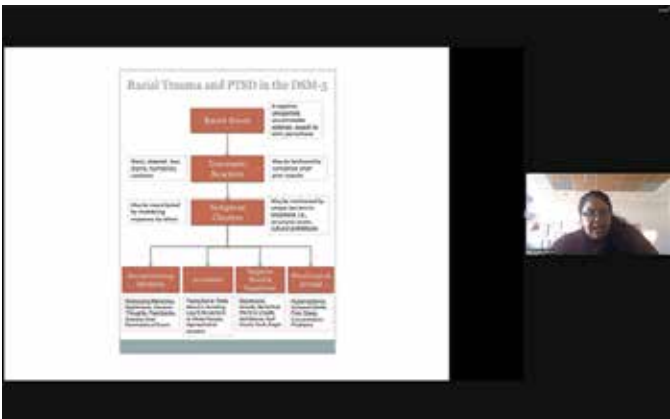
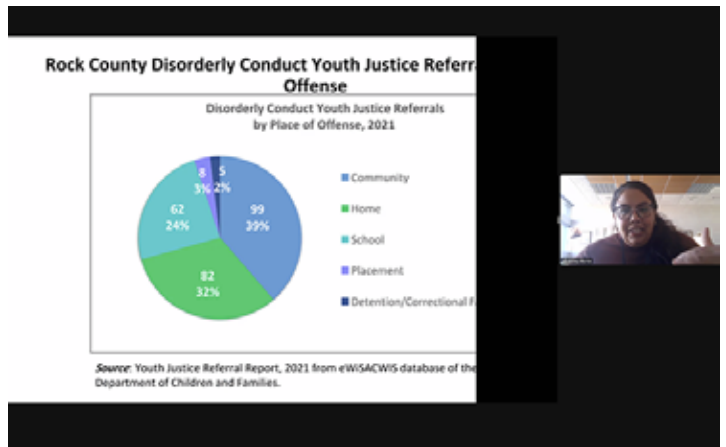
Upcoming Events  
Imbalance of Power

Page 4  
Page 5-6

# Foward Together Via Zoom



Hostesses Susan Adams, Beloit LWV and Linda Reinhardt, Janesville LWV. There were 39 participants in the Zoom meeting. Rock County Circuit Court Judge Ashley Morse was our guest speaker. The title of her presentation was "When Race and Trauma Collide. The need for Trauma - Informed Care for BIPOC Youth."



- Studies examining stereotype threat in Black Americans have found that when subjects are aware of the stereotype of Black criminality, anxiety about encountering police increases. This, in turn, can lead to self-regulatory efforts, more anxiety, and other behaviors that are commonly perceived as suspicious to police officers.
- Najdowski G, Bottoms BL, Goff PA (October 2015). "Stereotype threat and racial differences in citizens' experiences of police encounters" (PDF). *Law and Human Behavior* 39 (5): 463-77. [doi:10.1007/s11292-015-9600-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-015-9600-8)



# Voter Service Report



**Lisa Johnson**  
Voter Service Chair

Voter Services is in a word busy.....We made it through the primary process and on to the rest of our activities for the Spring Election! We are doing our best to promote voter services and voter education in our communities!

If you have any questions on Voter Services activities contained in this article please contact

Lisa Johnson c 608-333-8105 phone or text with questions or email at [lwj.voterservice@gmail.com](mailto:lwj.voterservice@gmail.com)

If any of our new members have questions on what is involved in Voter Services events etc., Lisa Johnson is the person to contact for the “scoop”.

Voter Services is great group! We have fun – inform the public and are quick to step up when called upon for volunteer activities.

## **Vote411.org:**

Vote411.org will be available shortly for our local races. The Supreme Court candidates are available now and we are waiting for the candidates responses in the contested races and then that will all be published.

Here are a few of our scheduled events:

Various Voter Services Tables in the community---separate signup emails to follow flexible schedules times available.

Farmers Market – 10-1pm First Saturdays March/April – Uptown Mall

Sustainability Fair – March 25<sup>th</sup> – Hedberg Library – 10-1pm XXXXX on XXXXX –

Janesville City Council Candidate Forum on Wednesday – March 8<sup>th</sup> 6pm in the City Council Chambers/Janesville City Hall

Signup volunteers to prep for the event as well as work the night of the event at City Hall –have been sent.

See our league website for submitting candidate questions.

School/Student Registration Events following the Primary on February 21

( Online Voter Registration Resumes February 22)

Communications Committee We have three members on the committee volunteering to assist with enhancing our social media presence : Maryam Enterline, Edna Feldman-Schultz and Sue Scott. Thank you ladies for volunteering and a public thank you to Heide Keith for expertise in the print media releases and also Carol Herzig for the great job she does with

our newsletter. You all are making a difference! Great job ladies ----Effective communication is the centerpiece of project or event!

Please watch your email for additional Voter Services events!

Contact Lisa Johnson c 608-333-8105 phone or text with questions or email at [lwj.voterservice@gmail.com](mailto:lwj.voterservice@gmail.com)

Thank you for your support!



## You Are Invited to LWV 103rd Birthday Party

**What:** Voter Service «Belated League  
Birthday Party/Coffee & Postcard Party

**When:** Saturday, March 11 · 9:00 – 11:00am

**Where:** Havana Coffee Shop - 1250 Mil-  
ton Ave. Janesville Meeting Room (Reserved)

**Who:** Members/Family/ and Friends of the League  
We have postcards from the LWV WI to address and send -- concerning the April Election

It would be great to get together - have a cup of coffee/tea/etc. – and something sweet while we work on postcards and “catch up”--- while we celebrate our 103rd birthday!

We hope you can attend. Feel free to stop in ! The time is “open” and not necessary to stay for the full 2 hours however, you are welcome to stay the entire time.

If you missed the email calendar invitation – contact Lisa Johnson by phone, text or email below.

Sponsored by:

**Voter Services Committee**

Contact: Lisa Johnson

[lwj.voterservice@gmail.com](mailto:lwj.voterservice@gmail.com)

Call: 608-333-8105

# \* Voter Service

Continued from page 3

**NEXT Voter Services Meeting –  
March 14 – Quick Zoom  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays – Via Zoom 6-30-7:30  
April 11 6:30-7:30 Via Zoom  
May 9 6:30-7:30 Via Zoom  
June 13 6:30-7:30 Via Zoom**



## **Election Dates** **Spring Election April 4**

**Visit [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org) or  
[myvote.wi.org](http://myvote.wi.org)**

## **The City of Janesville Annual Sustainability Fair**

The City of Janesville's Sustainable Janesville Committee's Annual Sustainability Fair will occur on Saturday, March 25, 2023 from 10AM – 1PM in the Hedberg Public Library's Program Room. The public is welcome, and it is a free event for all ages. Stop in and share the fun!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Wednesday, March 8: **Janesville City Council Candidate Forum** presented by LWV-Janesville, JATV, and LWVWI. 6:00-7:30 p.m. in the Janesville City Hall City Council Chambers, 18 N Jackson.

(Janesville residents are invited to submit questions for the candidates)

Tuesday, April 4: **Spring General Election.** We need volunteers to help inform and register voters. This is a prime time to connect with all the high school students who will have turned eighteen since November.

Thursday, April 20: Our League's **Third Annual Earth Week Forum.** This year's theme is **Community Sustainability.** This virtual forum will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Monday, June 5: **Annual Meeting of the LWV of Janesville.**

ALL members are encouraged to participate. We will meet at Premier-Bank, 1400 Black Bridge Road. Light appetizers (from Luke's Deli?) and refreshments will be provided. Social time at 6:00 pm. Business meeting will begin at 6:30 pm.

Check Upcoming Events at <https://www.lwvjvl.org/upcoming-events> for up-to-date information



## **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE WI SUPREME COURT?**

### **DECIDING CASES**

The WI Supreme Court decides on cases or questions from lower courts or cases it allows to bypass the lower court of appeals.

### **SUPERVISING THE WI COURTS**

The WI Supreme Court has an administrative function over all the courts in WI. This means they decide on court rules, budget, and more.

### **REGULATE THE WI COURTS**

The WI Supreme Court also regulates how lower courts function, such as overseeing bar admissions and monitors lawyers' compliance with continuing education.

# The Affects of Wisconsin's Imbalance of Power on Conservation in Wisconsin

Susan Johnson

VP and Sustainability Committee Chair

Those of us who watched Governor Evers deliver his budget proposal address this week on February 15, 2023 witnessed the effects of Wisconsin's highly gerrymandered legislative districts. One section was visibly smaller in number than what it would have been with democratically-drawn representative districts, and one section was much larger than it would have been with democratically-drawn representative districts.

The Wisconsin League of Women Voters is very clear on its stance regarding apportionment and redistricting in a democratic society. According to its website, it adheres to all the traditional redistricting principles such as district maps must uphold "population equality . . . with consideration of the compactness and contiguity of districts." Districts must meet the requirements of the Voting Rights Act, and guarantee fair representation for diverse populations. Communities of interest must be respected "as defined by town, village, city, county, or ward boundaries, and major geographical considerations." Beyond these traditional redistricting practices, the League fully supports having an independent commission to draw up a state's legislative and Congressional district maps. Of central importance to the League is transparency with "citizen participation and access at all levels and steps of the process."

The district maps Wisconsin uses currently after the 2020 Census, adhere closely to those drawn in 2011. The process used in 2011, however, did not resemble the League of Women Voters' recommended practice in the least. After Republicans won the Wisconsin elec-

tions in 2010, Scott Fitzgerald, Senate Majority Leader, and his brother Jeff Fitzgerald, Assembly Speaker were setting the agenda for the state legislature. According to Episode 2 of the Wisconsin Public Radio podcast entitled, "Mapped Out," the Fitzgerald brothers hired a private law firm across the street from the Capitol building to "help with the map-drawing." Their law office became "the map room." Adding further layers of secrecy, this law firm hired another law firm to help with the process, and the Senate Majority Leader, and Assembly Speaker required each Republican legislator to sign a "confidentiality agreement" before viewing the map, even for their own district. Not one Democratic legislator participated in the process, or even saw the map until the entire State Legislature was introduced to the Redistricting Bill on July 11, 2011. There was only one opportunity for the public to voice its opinion on the maps, and it happened after the fact on July 13. In 2011, Wisconsin redistricting definitely lacked the transparency and citizen involvement at all levels that the League of Women Voters recommends and seeks.

Not surprisingly, the district maps drawn in 2011 have resulted in an imbalance of power throughout the state of Wisconsin. For example, in the 2012 election, Republicans won 60 out of 99 seats in the Wisconsin Assembly and preserved their majority in the state Senate, despite receiving fewer than 50 percent of the total votes. This pattern has repeated itself every election cycle up to our present day.

This imbalance of power has affected all aspects of life in our state, but none more profoundly than the conservation of our natural resources. This was the theme of a forum held virtually on January 10, 2023, organized by Robin Schmidt, President of the League of Women Voters of the Lacrosse Area, and the Chippewa Valley League, and co-sponsored by the LWV of Janesville, along with several other Leagues throughout our state. In addition to her League involvement, Robin Schmidt is currently on the Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Green Fire organization, and worked for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for over 30 years. The forum panel included: Fred Clark, Executive Director of WI Green Fire, and former forester with the WI DNR; Paul Heinen, Policy Director for WI Green Fire, and Legislative Liaison for the WI DNR for over 34 years; and Mark Thimke, of the UW-Madison Law School, who worked as an environmental lawyer from 1979-2021.

Fred Clark reminded everyone that we have three branches of government; executive, legislative, and judicial, each of which are supposed to have equal power, and therefore, balance one another out. This is the core principle of the United States Constitution,

**REPRODUCTIVE CARE**  
The WISDOJ is set to argue a case about the 1849 criminal abortion ban that could come before the WI Supreme Court.

The SCOWIS could decide on a number of environmental protection cases, ranging from wolves in WI to climate change.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**ISSUES BEFORE THE WI SUPREME COURT**

**ELECTORAL MAPS**  
Recently, the WI Supreme Court took on a case involving our electoral maps. This type of case could return if our maps are redrawn or challenged.

**ELECTION RULES AND FINANCE**  
There is a continuing debate over ballot drop boxes, campaign finance laws, and more. The SCOWIS could decide on a number of electoral rules moving forward.

# \* Imbalance

Continued from page 5

and every state constitution, including Wisconsin's, reflects this foundation. However, given the imbalance of power inherent in the 2011 maps, the balance of the three branches was also thrown into imbalance after the election of Tony Evers as Governor in 2018.

The state legislature quickly passed bills, which changed the Administrative Code, and reduced the power of the Executive Branch, including the Governor's Office, and that of the Attorney General. To our present day, the state legislature has not confirmed 180 of the Governor's appointments left over from his first term. This number includes two women, Sharon Adams, whom Evers appointed to the Natural Resources Board, and Sandra Dee Nass, who has not been allowed to take her seat on the NR Board because Fred Prehn did not leave his seat until the end of 2022. We don't know if the Senate will confirm Nass. They could claim she is not qualified, even though she has served on the Conservation Congress. Changes in the Administrative Code affected the way the agencies do their work. Previously, agencies held more authority over their own offices. The state legislature now functions as a micro-manager, which makes agencies less flexible, when issues come up that might require adaptations.

The imbalance of power in the state has also resulted in loss of another core principle once held dearly by all Wisconsinites; adherence to local control. The ideal that local areas know their people and issues best is foundational for democratic (small d) government. Since the 2011 maps were drawn, local municipalities and counties have lost power to the state in many areas of government. In terms of our natural resources, this reduction has meant less power to regulate CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, which some call factory farms, because the DNR defines them as industrial operations with at least 1,000 cows), frac sand mining, and shoreland zoning in their local areas.

Today, Wisconsin has 331 CAFOs (WI Public Radio, Dec. 23, 2022) concentrated primarily in nine counties, which produce massive amounts of manure for disposal. This number includes large hog farms, each with at least 3,000 hogs. Combined with an over-abundance of fertilizer used to produce the state's crops (primarily corn and soybeans), the resulting nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations have polluted more than 1500 miles Wisconsin streams and rivers, and thirty-three lakes with toxic blue-green algae as assessed by the Environmental Working Group and the Midwest Environmental Advocates. The latter group is a nonprofit legal center helping communities resolve environmental justice issues and protect the rights of all people to healthy air, water, and land. The former group is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a mission to help all people live their healthiest life.

Without local control, the people have little

power over important issues like public health, clean water to drink, and clean air to breathe. Corporate profit-making, and the state's economy take top priority. Look at the situation in our neighboring state of Iowa, which has 10,000 hog-feeding operations. (WI Public Radio, Dec. 23, 2022) Iowa is saturated with manure, and cities, and towns are left to deal with their contaminated water on their own without the necessary resources to do much about it. With so many CAFOs located so closely together, there are also concerns of biosecurity, and the potential for diseases and pathogens to spread quickly across the state. Wisconsin, too, is heading for a public health crisis, if the people cannot regain control over their own communities.

What can the public do about the power imbalance in Wisconsin? Educate themselves more about democratic government, and what is happening around their state, and in their local areas. Get involved publicly, if you are not yet active, and stay involved, if you are already active. Attend public meetings and hearings to know what is being discussed. If your representatives are not dealing with issues important to you and your local area, let them know. Voice your opinions to your representatives at meetings, hearings, and in your local news media, and social media. Register to vote, and vote in every election to hold your representatives accountable.



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

*Each month we will be placing our position on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Voter, as a service to our members.*

LWV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

# LWV



There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

The Janesville LWV commits to the diversity of Janesville and fully endorses the LWV's DEI policy.

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## The Board Of Directors for 2022-23 are:

President—Linda Reinhardt  
VP—Susan Johnson  
Secretary—Renee Kalvestrand  
Treasurer—Sabrina Siker Bowerman  
Directors: Deb Griffith, Lisa Johnson, Heide  
Keith, Sue Scott and Rich Harper

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## **Web addresses of National, State and Local Leagues:**

To check out the action go to: **LWV-US** <[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)>  
**LWV-WI** <[my.lwv.org/wisconsin](http://my.lwv.org/wisconsin)>  
**JANESVILLE LEAGUE** <[www.lwvjvl.org](http://www.lwvjvl.org)>