

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
SHIRLEY STRANGE
2012-2013

It has been a creative, productive year for the League of Women Voters of Appleton. The outstanding work accomplished in the name of the League of Women Voters is due to the leadership of the Board and the support of the membership.

Board members took on their portfolios with gusto and the successful outcome of their work reflected each woman's commitment, strength and skills. The response of the membership in volunteering at various times made it possible to sponsor events. Thank you for the support you have shown during the year. Volunteering even for one event a year is of great service to our organization.

We started out 2012 with another celebration of Women's Equality Day at the History Museum at the Castle. An energetic committee made it happen offering lovely hors d'oeuvres and wine. All without a kitchen. Our featured speaker had to back out at the last minute, but we made it happen with a report on women in politics and a walk down memory lane with slides of historical Appleton. This is a can-do organization!!

Marvelous programming by Sara Companik and herculean voter service efforts championed by Irene Strohbeen were the beams of light highlighting the league in our community. Read of the accomplishments in their reports.

Community Presentations is the name we have given our latest endeavor. We have put together a powerpoint presentation describing the history of the league, explaining who we are and what we do. We have given presentations to the Arc group of Menasha, a Professional Insurance Group, and the Fox Cities Rotary Club. In June we will do a presentation at the Lion's Club in Appleton.

Legislative Director...a new board position was established this year. I mentioned that it was a creative year...Irene Strohbeen was asked to take on the position of vice president. She agreed to take the position but wanted to maintain the voter service portfolio. She was in the middle of establishing a solid framework for voter service and did not want to abandon the work. That left open a portfolio on action and advocacy. We decided to add a Legislative Director. I set my sights on Penny Robinson. She agreed after some persuading. She had the opportunity to begin something new at the grassroots level. We gave her free reign. And what a job she did. She got herself on the state legislative committee and attends their monthly meetings. This first hand connection to information from the state committee has been invaluable to our local league. We are kept abreast of bills and legislative action. Thank you, Penny!

The local study to update our library position is the hands of our very capable Miriam Douglass and she has a strong committee. The information that has been forthcoming on the future of libraries has been fascinating. Our imaginations have been allowed to soar.

Stephanie Malaney and the board have tackled the slippery schedule system of membership dues. The board has approved a policy regarding the intake of dues at different times of the year since new members join throughout the year. Our renewal schedule begins in October and is completed by January 31st. Our conundrum has always been that if a new member joins in the middle of the year, does she have to pay dues again by the end of the year when we complete our roster for state and national member payments. Stephanie's report will include this explanation.

Fund Raising...We have established a Fund Raising Committee. This committee is charged with bringing in funds to support the budget. One of the goals of this committee is to communicate the good work the league provides to this community and give organizations and individuals an opportunity to support us. We have worked seriously to track our expenditures including in-kind expenditures in order to present a realistic budget for the operations of the league. And to that, we thank Barbara Kelly who has managed the treasury with precision and expertise.

Anniversary Committee---The Steering Committee has met several times to begin planning for the 75th Anniversary Celebration which will take place in 2014. We have established several subcommittees giving members an opportunity to participate. We have placed a request with the state league to host the 2014 LWVWI State Annual Meeting. Our plan is to make this event part of the anniversary celebration and showcase that week in June as the highlight and culmination of our celebration.

We have had many success stories, but we do have areas that are open and waiting for enthusiastic individuals looking for new horizons. The observer corps is one of our most important areas needing attention. Attending meetings, gathering information, keeping current with city council, county board and school board decisions and policy-making is vitally important as it allows us to speak out on important issues. A committee of several members would reduce the work load and allow individuals to take on a manageable portion of the year to fit her schedule. Even one month a year would be helpful.

Another area and one that is multi-faceted is the work of the Communication Director. Practically there should be three to four people working in this area. Barb Dorzweiler has undertaken all of the roles- website manager, newsletter publisher, facebook and publicity. You can see it would be very helpful to have a few more people participating here. Our thanks to Barb for her work in each of these roles. This area is crucial to spreading the word about the League, informing the public on issues, legislation and forums. Barb is stepping down this year, so here is a great opportunity for several candidates. Our thanks, Barb, for your time and work on the board.

I too, step, down from my post this year. At my last board meeting, Thursday, May 7, it struck me that after eight years of attending monthly league board meetings, this was my last. What have I gained? Let me count...too long a list...I said once that joining the League of Women Voters was one of the best choices I made in my life. I stand by that!! Thank you for the privilege of being at the helm of this outstanding organization whose members who are informed, engaged, motivating, strong, courageous, inspiring, and brilliant. I could go on...

Thank you.

Shirley