

## **Our LWVJDC Accomplishments in 2019**

January 9: The League of Women Voters joined the Galena Rotary Club at Eagle Ridge Inn to present a Roundtable Program on Jo Daviess County Bipartisan Economic Development. The event was well attended with interesting presenters and break-out sessions.

January 26: Our 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held at the DeSoto Hotel with a business meeting including election of new board of directors followed by lunch served by the hotel staff. Following lunch, an excellent presentation on Replacing the Electoral College was presented by our guests Joyce Williams from LaGrange and Rosemary Heileman from Buffalo Grove, both on the Electoral College Committee for the LWVIL.

February 16: "Quiche and Questions" at Midwest Medical Center Café Meeting Room. Attendance was good, and we welcomed several new members, along with getting to know other prospective members who joined us later in the year.

March 12: LWVJDC Board meeting including approval to enter into a contract with Padgham Larson, who worked with Beth Baranski during the summer of 2019 to create instructional materials and lesson plans for young students to learn about the watershed in Jo Daviess County and the qualities of the land in the driftless area. Padgham met with the LWVJDC Board throughout the summer. Members of the board made many suggestions and encouraged her in her work. She shared results of her work with board members early in January 2020.

March 14: Candidate Night at Galena Middle School produced an informative discussion on the Galena School District as candidates for school board explained their positions on important issues in this election.

March 23: Our League held a Membership Leadership Development Event in the meeting room at Prairie Ridge. Mary Sheahen led the workshop from 10:00 AM until Noon, involving a group of community leaders of all ages in a discussion of "Emotional Intelligence: Key to Successful Leadership."

April 22: Earth Day Booth sponsored by the Jo Daviess League was set up in Turner Hall with other booths. Many school children attended the event during the day, and adults attended in the late afternoon. Present to represent Water Resource Management were Beth Baranski and Bonnie Cox.

May: All six high schools in Jo Daviess County and the CTE Academy in Elizabeth were contacted to encourage their participation in a new project initiated by a committee led by co-president Irene Thraen-Borowski. The project work continued through the summer, creating 500 birthday envelopes for seniors who turn 18 throughout the 2019-2020 schoolyear. The gift envelopes contain information on where new voters can register and how they can locate their polling places. The envelopes also contained a letter written by one of our members, encouraging 18 year olds to become active in the

political process and have their voices heard. Each birthday gift included a uniquely designed pencil, symbolizing the values of the League of Women Voters.

June 7-9: The League of Women Voters of Illinois held their 59<sup>th</sup> Biennium Convention in Champaign, Illinois, to conduct business of the LWVIL and to network with others who work on LWV issues throughout our state. Members Irene Thraen-Borowski and Beth Baranski were our representatives at the convention. Beth Baranski was surprised at the Awards Ceremony to be the recipient of the Inspired Leadership Award. The LWVJDC nominated Beth for the award, and Irene introduced Beth at the convention with a speech about Beth's many accomplishments. Beth also gave a speech in response to receiving the award. We are so proud of both of our delegates to this important convention.

July 8: The LWVJDC welcomed our members and friends from the community to an informational meeting on Abolishing the Electoral College. A presentation was given to an audience of 50 people at the Galena Middle School Commons, moderated by Bonnie and John Cox. The evening included the sharing of divergent opinions from members in the audience and, overall, an intelligent discussion of the issue.

August 28: LWVJDC partnered with the Galena Historical Museum to celebrate the opening of the exhibit "The Fight for Suffrage" in the Alice B. Toebaas Memorial Room. Over 50 people viewed the new exhibit and shared wine and appetizers. Bonnie Cox gave a short speech on the founding of the League of Women Voters. She recommended the book *The Women's Hour* by Elaine Weiss.

September 5: In the United States House of Representatives, the Honorable Cheri Bustos recognized the LWVJDC for winning the Water Quality Challenge put on by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. In her speech she said, "It is because of community leaders such as the League of Women Voters of Illinois that I am especially proud to serve the Illinois' 17<sup>th</sup> Congressional District."

September 18-21: The LWVJDC held a Fall Garage Sale at the Turney House on Highway 20 in Galena. Under the leadership of John and Bonnie Cox, many of our members donated items, helped to organize and sell the items, enjoyed seeing old friends and meeting new friends, and cleaned up when it was all over. The total profit from this year's garage sale was \$1500.00. We are planning another garage sale in the spring of 2020.

September 24: National Voter Registration Day was celebrated by delivering our "Welcome to 18" birthday gift packets to all six JDC High Schools, West Carroll High School in Carroll County, and to the CTE Academy near Elizabeth.

October 12-13: We sponsored a Fudge Booth at Galena Country Fair, and many of our League members participated in making and selling the fudge. We enjoyed our time together. We had good, cool weather for the Country Fair this year, and with remarkable sales techniques, we realized a gross profit (before expenses) of \$1,432.50.

Since this event is a charitable event for our community, we give 25% of our net profit to the Country Fair Board to be distributed to various charities in Jo Daviess County.

November and December: We celebrated our many activities and accomplishments, and we enjoyed a new Social Hour Event which was instituted in September. After our late afternoon monthly meetings, every member of the LWVJDC is invited to join Board Members at dinner in a local restaurant. We encourage inviting friends who are interested in the League to join us as well. The event is advertised on our Facebook page and on our Website.

**We thank the many members who support our League of Women Voters in Jo Daviess County! We are grateful for the help and support you give your local league. The following acknowledgements are for special services provided to us:**

Throughout the year, our members have continued to work on the Jo Daviess County Water Resource Management Plan, including collaboration with other Leagues in the area around the Mississippi watershed. Beth Baranski, Bonnie Cox, and Judy Gratton are leaders from our LWVJDC.

We have maintained an active online presence with our new LWVJDC Website, constructed in 2019 and managed by Irene Thraen-Borowski, [www.lwvjodaviess.org](http://www.lwvjodaviess.org), and our Facebook page, co-managed by Mary Sheahan and Irene Thraen-Borowski, League of Women Voters of Jo Daviess County.

We're grateful for Alice Pearson Lundh, who uses her communication skills to help us organize, format, and send our newsletters, now coming on a regular basis. We're thankful that Alice will be our new LWVJDC Board Secretary.

We also thank our Issues, Action, and Candidate Forum Chairperson Kathy Pearson. Kathy organizes our forums, when we have candidates who agree to participate, and coordinates Call to Action emails.

Our Board of Directors faithfully led our local LWV with monthly board meetings to plan, coordinate, and evaluate our role in the Jo Daviess County community. All members are welcome at board meetings. You can check out board meeting times on our website and in our newsletter. Thank you to our local board leaders of 2019: Irene Thraen Borowski and Sue Cording, Co-Presidents; Kathy Pearson, Vice President; Esther Lieberman, Vice President; Jeanie Norman, Secretary; Judy Gratton, Treasurer; and Mary Sheahan, Director of MLD. We look forward to also welcoming Bonnie Cox, Shari Kochman, and Alice Lundh to our 2020 Board of Directors.

We wish the very best to our two new Co-Presidents: Irene Thraen-Borowski and Jeanie Norman. They both have LWV Board experience and will lead us well through 2020.

Thank you to our nominating committee: Chairperson Peg Murphy, Charlene Price, Diann Marsh, and LWV Board Member Jeanie Norman.