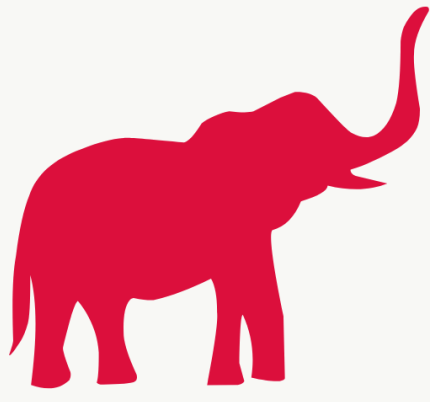


Winnebago GOP NEWSLETTER

May 2025



Notable Quote

"Where taxes are unnecessarily high, we are robbing labor and capital alike."

Chester A. Arthur (1882)

21st President of the United States

Chairman's Message

- **Paul Hofmann**

Dear Fellow Republicans,

"A Reflection and a Challenge"

A recent article posed the question: *What does your car say about you?* It sparked a broader thought. How do our everyday choices reflect our values? While appearances don't always tell the full story, commitment, reliability, and a willingness to take risks are traits that speak volumes, especially in the political arena. That spirit was on display in the recent consolidated election. We applaud the many Republican candidates who stepped up to run. It takes courage to put your name on a ballot, and we're proud of the effort and sacrifice so many made. Now, we turn our attention to what's next. The Winnebago County GOP is focused on strengthening our ground game. That starts with our Precinct Committeepersons (PCs). We're holding two training sessions to equip both new and current PCs. Please see events below. In addition, we're investing in new tools to dramatically improve voter data and outreach. These changes will support campaigns and empower grassroots engagement across the county. Thank you for staying involved. Together, we are building momentum and preparing to win the next round.



Winnebago GOP Message

The Winnebago County Republican Party is entering a season of renewed purpose, growing our digital reach through a redesigned website, social media, and a new YouTube channel, all tools to spread our message and energize our base. But this momentum is about more than clicks; it's about coming together to reflect on our values, raise our public profile, and reestablish the role of Republicans in our community. From meaningful conversations to impactful events like the Chili Cook-Off and Lincoln Day Dinner, we're building a movement rooted in service, unity, and action, because strengthening our party means strengthening Winnebago County.

The Struggle and the Taxes Are Real

A 2024 Pew Research Center study reveals, 58% of public K–12 teachers identify with the Democratic Party, while 35% identify with or lean toward the Republican Party. Campaign contribution data from the 2022 election cycle indicates that 68% of political donations from K–12 teachers went to Democratic candidates or committees.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) has contributed over \$126 million to federal campaigns since 1990, with more than 99% directed to Democrats. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) has donated over \$232 million to federal campaigns since 1990, with 99% going to Democratic candidates.

Rockford Public School District 205 – Approximately 4,075 employees is Rockford's Largest Employer. As of 2025, Rockford Public School District 205 accounts for approximately 50.5% of a typical property tax bill in Rockford, Illinois.

The end result is that Democrats dominate Public Assistance Recipients, Public Employees at Federal, State and Local Levels, and they dominate Government Employee Unions. All of these factors combine to make Democrats and their constituents in Public Sector unions a powerful taxing force in Winnebago County and active passionate voters whose paychecks depend on continuing to prop up property tax rates in Winnebago County.

We just had a consolidated election and these elections elect people that determine Tax Levy Increases. Voter participation is less than 20% and these are positions that directly impact our tax bills. The next election is in 17 months, and we'll be working hard to get more voters out to impact our governmental units so that we can impact taxation rates. See Property Tax Increase story [here](#).

National Spotlight

Egg Prices: Crisis or Correction?

Democrats called it a national crisis and demanded more government control. One company's profits caused outrage. But Republicans trusted the free market, and prices are stabilizing. Once again, conservative principles prove effective. Less government, more individual choice, and market-driven solutions. A small but clear example of how our Republican leadership is restoring prosperity by putting Americans, not bureaucracy, first.. See chart [here](#).

State Spotlight

Title IX: Transgender Policy in Illinois:

Governor Pritzker has become a leading national advocate for transgender rights. [Story Here](#). He and the IHSA oppose federal efforts to restrict transgender athletes in girls' sports, allowing biological males to compete, despite overwhelming public opposition from Illinoisans. [Story Here](#). Under his administration, Illinois expanded Medicaid to include gender-

Highest Taxed State in America:

Illinois is considered the state with the highest overall tax rates in the United States. This ranking is based on a variety of factors, including real estate, vehicle property, income, and sales excise taxes. Illinois has the second-highest property taxes in the nation, behind New Jersey. See story [here](#).

affirming surgeries. Pritzker has pledged to protect access to these procedures, framing them as healthcare rights. His stance places Illinois at the forefront of progressive transgender policies in both sports and medicine in opposition to Federal Law. [Story Here.](#)

----- Local Spotlight -----

Winnebago County Board Considers Restoring Chairman's Powers:

A dozen members of the Winnebago County Board sponsored an ordinance to restore executive powers to the chairman's office. The aim is to re-establish the chairman as the undisputed leader of the board, reversing previous decisions that diluted the role's authority. The proposed changes have sparked discussions about governance and the balance of power within the county's political structure. [Rockford Register Star](#) reported this story but it requires subscription.

New Indian and Pakistani Grocery and Restaurant to Open in Rockford:

A new cultural and culinary addition is coming to Rockford with the planned opening of the Rockford International Market. Located at 5856 E. State St., adjacent to Valli Produce. This establishment will feature Indian and Pakistani grocery items alongside a restaurant. The market aims to serve the diverse community in Rockford, providing access to a variety of South Asian foods and ingredients. See [story here.](#)

Upcoming Events

- May 31 - PC Training 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Candidate training 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm at Republican HQ 555 Perryville Road, Rockford
- June 2 - Rockford City Council - General Meeting Rockford City Hall Council Chambers 5:30 pm
- June 14 - Patrotic Wreath Workshop 1:00 to 3:00 555 S. Perryville Rd
- June 16 - Rockford City Council - General Meeting Rockford City Hall Council Chambers 5:30 pm

See Online Events Calendar [here](#)
**Registration is required for some events*



Precinct Spotlight

**Bill Wetzbarger - Cherry Valley 2
Republican Precinct Committeeman**

Bill Wetzbarger serves as Precinct Committeeman and Area Captain for Cherry Valley 2, where his no-nonsense, neighbor-to-neighbor approach is setting the standard for local Republican activism. Bill has helped drive 90% voter turnout in his precinct during presidential elections going door to door in full GOP gear using flyers he crafted listing endorsed candidates.

A retired RN and Army veteran who served in both enlisted and commissioned roles, Bill brings leadership and precision to everything he does, including organizing Lincoln Day Dinner raffles, serving on the Republican Century Club, and volunteering at the county fair.

Bill's political journey includes early involvement in the Tea Party movement, where he recognized the need to take action and not just attend meetings. That conviction led him to get directly involved with the local Republican Party.

"If you're elected to do the work—do it, or step aside and let someone who will," Bill says.

With more 50 years as a Republican, Bill has seen the party evolve and is encouraged by its growing grassroots strength. His advice to the next generation: take a political science course, understand where you stand, and run for something that matters, starting with your own community. "Get elected. Run for smaller public offices on the school board or for PC or other smaller offices like in the many surrounding townships." Bill currently serves on the Cherry Valley Township Board of Trustees.

Platform Highlight

"Fair and Simple Taxes for Growth"

- Republicans consider the establishment of a pro-growth tax code a moral imperative.
- Getting our tax system right will be the most important factor in driving the entire economy back to prosperity.
- We oppose tax policies that deliberately divide Americans or promote class warfare.

Read the full **Republican Party Platform** [here](#)



Closing Note

Thank you for your continued support of the Republican Party and our shared vision for a brighter future. Together, we're building a stronger, more prosperous Winnebago County. Let's keep the momentum going!

Contact Us

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[Website: winnebagogop.com](http://winnebagogop.com)

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