



League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County
Established in Livonia in 1960

VOTER

www.lwvwww.org

Serving: Canton, Garden City, Livonia, Northville,
Plymouth, Redford, Wayne and Westland

December, 2011
Volume XLVIX, No. 8

January 7th Membership Meeting—National Program Planning

Join us for lunch at Eastside Marios in Livonia (on Plymouth Road, west of Merriman) at 11:30 on Saturday, January 7th. Lunch will be ordered off the menu.

We'll enjoy each other's company and discuss upcoming League events. Additionally, we will spend some time on LWVUS program planning.

Every two years, local and state Leagues participate in the LWVUS program planning process by making recommendations concerning program issues—this is how we remain a grassroots organization.

The Program Planning process is an important League tool for identifying issues for study. It gives members and Leagues the opportunity to balance the pros and cons, assess possible support and consider the viability of issues. During the process, members have the opportunity—especially with email and discussion lists—to organize support based on factual materials before the program planning deadline of March 1. If you are on a League "list serve" you may see some discussion regarding issues that other Leagues around the country are promoting with the hope of garnering enough support for their issue that multiple Leagues will call for a study at the convention in June, 2012.

Each of YOU have the opportunity to propose a study or ask that a position be reconsidered for re-study. To review all of the LWVUS positions in detail, visit the www.lwv.org website. We'll have some copies of the positions in brief at the January meeting. If you would like to discuss an idea for a study in advance of the January meeting, contact Paula Bowman or Angela Ryan who can work with you on a presentation.

LOOKING FOR A LAST MINUTE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING?

We can help! How about a League membership? For \$55, you can give the gift of knowledge and involvement that may give your recipient the opportunity to make a difference in his or her community, state or country.

Contact Paula Bowman for a membership certificate you may present to your special person. Paula will also help you with a membership gift for Leagues outside of Northwest Wayne County.



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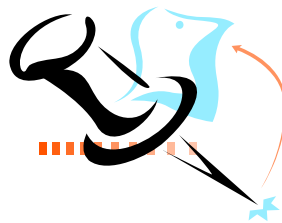
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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

The work of the League is financed by the dues of members and by contributions from citizens in the community.



President's Message

Happy Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, and any other holiday that you may celebrate this time of year. As the year draws to a close, we can look back on a successful year for the League. We completed many candidate for, had a successful fund raising, and registered many new voters at Schoolcraft College, to name a few of our accomplishments. Since 2012 is a national election year, we will definitely have lots on our plate.

The auction on November 5 was quite a success. Our auctioneer, Vivian Hederhan, did an excellent job in convincing the attendees that each item for auction was not to be missed. We gave Vivian a gift card for donating her time to our cause. She sent a lovely thank-you card. I think she was quite surprised with our gift to her. From my perspective, her efforts helped us to achieve what we did. I also want to thank everyone who donated items and/or time to work on the auction as well as those who attended. If no one had bid on the items, it would've been a pretty dreary event. Let's not forget those who brought treats to eat and drink. They added to the enjoyment of the afternoon. I think the fundraising committee is already thinking about how to improve on the auction for next year.

Last week, Charlene Krygier and I attended our second meeting on the state Redistricting Study. The group is moving forward with developing questions and background information to provide to all state Leagues early next year.

Our first meeting of 2012 will be January 7 (see details on page 1.) I hope to see many of you there. In the meantime, enjoy the time you spend with friends and family during this holiday season.



Angela Ryan

AUCTION

Lena Packer

Thank you!

We held our fall auction on November 5 at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Livonia. Our very generous members provided a wide variety of items for the auction along with a wonderful assortment of snacks and beverages. I am very pleased to report that we made \$1553!! Many of those who attended took home a variety of treasures.

This fundraiser was a truly a group project with so many people helping to make it such a success. I would like to thank everyone who helped with this auction. Rosemary Doyle and Esther Friedrichs called our members to solicit donations to be auctioned. I know they had to make several calls to finally contact everyone. I would like to thank Joan Gebhardt for contacting Vivian Henderhan to act as our auctioneer. She did a fantastic job running the auction. Everything ran so smoothly with her as our MC.

Our refreshment committee consisted of Mary Visos, Ann Abdoo, and Roberta Young. They did a wonderful job organizing the food and drinks. Along with these committee members, the following people donated snacks: Angela Ryan, Pat Tavidian, Charlene Krygier, Laura Callow, Paula Bowman, Rosemary Doyle, and Toni Shepherd. Thank you for all the tasty goodies!

Several members helped in the set up and clean up of this event including Pat Tavidian, Laura Callow, Roberta Young, Sue Wabeke, Paula Bowman, Angela Ryan, Ann Abdoo, and her husband, Rick. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. I would like to thank Joan Gebhardt, Paula Bowman, Toni Shepherd, and Charlene Krygier for taking care of signing in our guests

and handling the auction bids checkout at the end.

In addition to all of this help, our auction could not have been successful without the fantastic donations we received. A very special thank you to all of these members who donated items: Natalie Mosher, Laura Callow, Rosemary Doyle, Elizabeth McCully, Heather Mezzardi, Angela Ryan, Toni Shepherd, Pat Tavidian, Sue Wabeke, Nancy White, Ann Abdoo, Paula Bowman, Marshall Blondy, Esther Friedrichs, Joan Gebhardt, Charlene Krygier, Roberta Young, Laura Corruner, Lynda Franklin, Rachel Rion, Yvonne Schanz, Mary Visos, and Lena Packer.

I would like to give a special thank you to the following businesses who provided auction items. Thank you to Mezzardi Computer Repair, Gloria Parker at The Detroit Institute of Arts, Kathleen Sagona from V Salon, and Paul Worley at Whispering Willows Golf Course.

As you can see, so many people were involved in this event. Without all of you, this auction could not have happened. Thank you so much for all of your time.

Don't Forget!

Next membership meeting is Saturday, January 7th at 11:30 am at Eastside Mario's in Livonia.



Come enjoy lunch with your League friends, hear about upcoming plans for the next few months and participate in LWVUS program planning.

No RSVP necessary— just come! Your voice is important.

CONVENIENT VOTING

By Ann Abdoo



In general elections, approximately 20 percent of Michigan voters vote by absentee ballot.

In order to do this they must request an application, fill it out and check one of six reasons for needing to vote absentee and then return it to the City Clerk's office in order to receive an absentee ballot in the mail.

Senate bill #49, sponsored by Senator Steve Bieda (D-Warren) and co-sponsored by Senator Glenn Anderson (D-Westland) and House bill #4520 sponsored by Rep. Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor), were introduced in the legislature in October. Both of these bills would allow for a "no reason absentee ballot."

Currently, these bills are held up in committees of their respective chambers. The committee chairs decide which bills will have a hearing and a vote to take it to the floor. If they don't support the bill or think there are not enough votes to get it out of committee, no action is taken.

The Michigan League of Women Voters supports these bills and would like them to come to the floor of the State House and Senate for a vote. To make this happen our representatives need correspondence that they can take to the committee chairs to show them that people want this legislation passed. It can be an email or a letter.

People who are against this legislation will say they are concerned about fraud. My response is that we should all be concerned about fraud, but 27 other states already have "no reason absentee voting," and it has worked well for them. Additionally, the Michigan Associations of County and City Clerks are confident that this change will not lead to election fraud.

Seventy percent of Michigan voters support no reason absentee voting. (Survey conducted by

Denno-Noor Research for LWVMI in 2010) Currently people age 60 and over can vote absentee by right. Many of these people are retirees. Yet, the busiest people, those who are working and have children, do not have the same opportunity.

The U.S. Census Bureau found that 20% of the registered voters who did not vote in the 2008 general election said they were "too busy, conflicting schedule."

Of course, the best reason would be a personal story or the story of a friend or family member who did not vote, because the six reasons for absentee voting did not cover their particular situation.

You are eligible to vote by absentee ballot if:

- ♣ You are 60 years old or older
- ♣ You are unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- ♣ You are expecting to be out of town on election day
- ♣ You are in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- ♣ You are unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- ♣ You are appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence.

I urge all of you to correspond with your State Senator and Representative if you support the legislation for "no reason absentee ballot" and relay a personal story of someone who did not vote because they didn't qualify for an absentee ballot. They need to hear from you. If you have any questions or concerns about doing this, please contact me at 734-525-4326 or arabdoo@earthlink.net

MINGLING WITH PRESIDENTS

By: Paula Bowman

The LWV of Michigan has been honored to host both the current and immediate past national League presidents in the past several months. I attended two local events featuring our guests and found both of these leaders to be impressive—both in their knowledge and approachability.

On October 19th, former LWWUS president Mary Wilson was a panelist at a Redistricting conference at Cooley Law School in Lansing. President Wilson is an expert on various redistricting methods used around the country, and was able to share the different practices with the audience. Michigan's new maps for our Congressional and state legislative districts were signed into law in August and will remain in place for the next decade. In Michigan, the party in control of the state legislature draws the maps, which many feel are drawn to protect the future election prospects of that political party. Voters are chosen by the redistricting process, rather than allowing voters to choose their legislator. Among other panelists at the October 19th event, Rep. John Walsh (R-12) and Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-12) were scheduled to appear. Unfortunately, both legislators cancelled only hours before the event.

In mid-November, current LWWUS President Elisabeth MacNamara visited Michigan. The focus of her trip was to visit with legislators and the media regarding the League's work to retain the standards for clean air itemized in the Clean Air Act of 1970. Unfortunately, some current members of Congress are working to strip the EPA of its ability to be effective by repealing some of the protections in the Clean Air Act. At an event in Dearborn on November 15th, President MacNamara detailed the Clean Air Promise campaign, a national effort to protect children and families from dangerous air pollution by obtaining commitments from our leaders to safeguard the Clean Air Act and the EPA's enforcement ability.

These visits by these esteemed League leaders were due in part to the Michigan League's continued hard work and commitment to projects initiated by the national League.

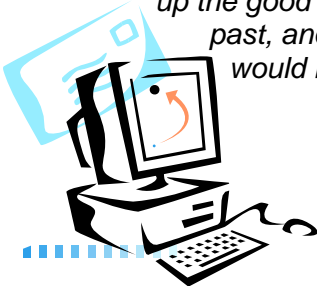
THE LEAGUE RECEIVED THIS EMAIL on November 9th, the day after the election:

"I am a voter in Plymouth City. Just wanted to take a moment to thank you for the voter guides for the Plymouth City Commission, and the Plymouth-Canton School Board. The information is presented in a very simple format, allowing a fair comparison of the candidate positions, and their priorities, if elected. For the time and effort that the League of Women Voters takes in preparing these voter guides, I wanted to say a BIG THANK YOU.

Although you may not hear feedback from many voters, Mine is all positive. Please continue and keep up the good work. One other small point... I have attended the forums put on by LWV in the past, and found these to be extremely valuable. As we approach the 2012 elections, it would be very, very helpful if you could continue to hold these.

Thank you again.

An appreciative voter"



Next Meeting: January 7th, 11:30 am

League of Women Voters
PO Box 51502
Livonia, MI 48151



Become a Partner for Change with
the League of Women Voters.

Yes, I wish to join the League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

_____ E-Mail _____

Open to any citizen over the age of 18.
My check of \$55 is enclosed.
Make check payable to LWV of Northwest Wayne County
PO Box 51502, Livonia, MI 48151