



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

# VOTER

[www.lwvwww.org](http://www.lwvwww.org)

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

February, 2010  
Volume XLVIII, No. 2

## *Calendar*

Saturday, Feb. 27  
Noon—2:00 pm  
Livonia Civic Ctr. Library

Membership Meeting to reach consensus on the LWVMI Prison Re-Study. Lunch will be provided (bring a \$5 contribution please)

Saturday, March 20

Transport Day to deliver books to Westland Mall. (See article on p. 4)

Wed., March 24  
7:15 pm  
Livonia Civic Ctr. Library

Membership Meeting. We will be joined by several members from the non-profit group, Michigan Campaign for Justice, which is fighting for a fair and effective public defense system in Michigan. The public is welcome to attend this meeting

Wed., April 21  
9:45—4:00 PM  
Lansing

Training and Action Day in Lansing. To celebrate the LWVUS' 90th birthday, all Michigan LWV members are invited to attend this LWVMI sponsored event. Background will be provided on policy issues that deal with voting and elections, and Tim O'Brien from LWVUS will conduct training so that members will know the best way to advocate League positions with their legislators. After lunch (small cost to members), we will visit our legislators at the Capital. We hope to have a solid contingent from our League, so if you are interested in this event and want to carpool, please contact Paula Bowman.



April 23-25  
Westland Mall

Used Book Sale planned.

Saturday, May 22  
Western Golf &  
Country Club—Redford

LWV Northwest Wayne County's 50th Birthday Celebration.

Sunday, July 4

Participation in Plymouth's 4th of July Parade (see page 5)

LWV NWW Board of Directors  
2009-10:

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Lena Packer

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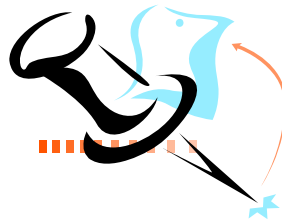
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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

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



## *President's Message*

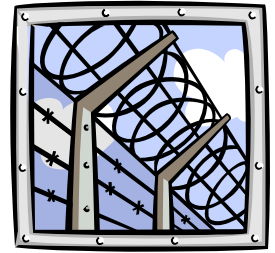
After a relatively calm few months, we are heading into a mid-term election year that will prove to be busy and invigorating. Charlene Krygier is already working on the first candidate forum for 2010—the Livonia School Board race. We expect the forum to be in early April, and will have a date for you soon. This will be just the beginning of 6 months of primaries and general election races—and the League will be hard at work presenting non-partisan information to a public that is desperate for unbiased, accessible information. We know we can count on League members to help us with the challenges ahead.

Thank you to the members who attended the January 30th Program Planning meeting at Eastside Marios. After a nice lunch, and convincing arguments from several members who are also advocates for a Department of Peace, the majority of those present voted to support the Department of Peace Movement. The Fair Elections Now proposal came in second. Results of our meeting have been sent to the LWVUS, along with those of other local Leagues all over the country. The national board will tally the results and make program recommendations to the membership who will assemble at the national convention in May. Charlene Krygier will attend the convention in Atlanta as our local League representative.

We have an enthusiastic 50th anniversary committee which is hard at work to make this a memorable year for all of us. I've had great fun looking through many old newspaper articles and photographs that Roberta Young and Joan Gebhardt have scanned and saved. Our League sure has a remarkable history! Some of these are already posted on the display boards making the rounds in our libraries, and others will be available for viewing at our May 22nd luncheon. And didn't you always want to be in a parade? Be sure to read the article on page 5 and join in the fun on the 4th of July.

I hope to see all of you at the Prison Re-Study Consensus meeting this coming Saturday.

## PRISON RE-STUDY MEETING #2:



We were honored to welcome 16th District Court Judge Kathleen McCann to our February 11th membership meeting. Judge McCann spoke about the 3 types of justice - retributive, restorative and therapeutic - that embody the first consensus question of our prison position re-study. Funding limitations are one of the many challenges that the Judge and her staff face each day. Judge McCann was accompanied by her Deputy Court Administrator, Natalie Stojevska, who discussed the Drug Court program. This was new information to many of us, and we were impressed with this progressive program right in our own community. We learned about the probation department which relies in part on volunteers who routinely meet with offenders, and were proud to learn that Livonia has the largest volunteer probation corps of any city in Michigan. Our own LWV member Sue Wabeke is a volunteer and encourages anyone to help with this public service. We were very grateful to Judge McCann and Ms. Stojevska for sharing so much good information with us.

**PRISON RE-STUDY MEETING #3:** After listening to several speakers discuss Prison Reform and the practical challenges of the judicial system today, and reading the background material (available in total on [www.lwvmi.org](http://www.lwvmi.org)), our League will work to reach consensus on the 7 questions that Leagues all over Michigan are working on. **Please join us this Saturday**, February 27th, at noon at the Livonia Civic Center Library. We will provide a light lunch as we discuss the questions.

This is a casual discussion meeting. Though your attendance at the prior 2 meetings may help as we discuss the questions, it is not necessary. We want as many members as possible to help us reach a group consensus, so please join us. If you want a refresher of the topic, please read some of the materials that were part of recent *Voters*, or for a complete package of the background material, visit the state League's website at [www.lwvmi.org](http://www.lwvmi.org). Copies of the questions and the background material will be available on Saturday.

We will provide a light lunch on Saturday. Please bring \$5 to contribute towards the cost. What a deal!



### GIVING AWAY MONEY!

For the third year in a row, the League will be offering a scholarship to a student in our area, which will be awarded at our Annual Meeting. The eligibility requirements are as follows:

- ♣ Must be a US citizen and a resident of a community serviced by the LWV Northwest Wayne County: Canton, Garden City, Livonia, Wayne County portion of Northville, Plymouth, Redford, Wayne or Westland
- ♣ Must be currently enrolled in a Michigan college or university in an undergraduate program.
- ♣ Must be entering (at minimum) a third year of study at a Michigan college or university by December 31, 2010.
- ♣ Must be majoring in political science, government or public policy.
- ♣ Both women and men are eligible.

Applicants must submit an essay in response to this statement: *The United States government presently faces many challenges at home and abroad. Identify one of these challenges and address how you would hope to influence public policy in this area.* Other application requirements are noted on our website, [www.lwvww.org](http://www.lwvww.org). If you know of students who may qualify for this scholarship, please direct them to our website where they will find all the application details. Applications must be postmarked by April 17, 2010.

## **“DOING NOTHING NOT AN OPTION” CONGRESS MUST ACT QUICKLY IN AFTER- MATH OF CITIZENS UNITED DECISION**

On February 3, 2010, the League of Women Voters testified before the Committee on House Administration in a hearing entitled Defining the Future of Campaign Finance in an Age of Supreme Court Activism. At the U.S. congressional hearing, Mary Wilson, the national League president, told committee members that they must pass legislation governing corporate and union spending quickly, in order for it to take effect for the 2010 elections.

“The Court’s majority decision in Citizens United v. FEC was fundamentally wrong and a tragic mistake. But this is the decision of the Court,” said Wilson. “Congress needs to respond now, recognizing its own authority and responsibility to uphold the Constitution. Fair and clean elections, determined by the votes of American citizens, should be at the center of our democracy.”

“The Court’s decision in Citizens United upends basic campaign finance law that has been in place for a century. It changes the foundation on which decades of congressional enactments on money in elections are built. Such a fundamental change requires a strong response from Congress and the Executive.”

The League supports numerous concepts moving forward in this post-Citizens United context; however, Wilson stressed the urgency in doing something now.

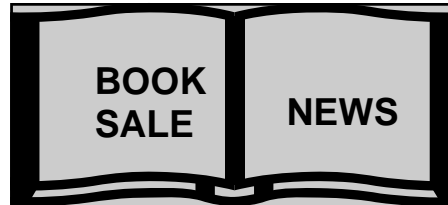
“After Citizens United, we urgently need enhanced disclosure. This is the most basic step toward protecting the role of the voter in making decisions in elections,” stated Wilson. “It is now possible for corporations to secretly provide funds that another corporation uses to intervene in an election through independent expenditures. This is not acceptable. The League of Women Voters supports strong disclosure requirements for both those who receive election funds and those who provide such funds.”

“After providing enhanced disclosure, the next most important step for Congress is to do no further harm. A decision as far-reaching in its implications as Citizens United will provoke a number of proposals that,

we believe, could make our election system and government processes even worse,” Wilson argued.

“We need fair elections, not greater involvement of big money in elections and government. Each of these steps – such as altering contribution limits to candidates and PACs or allowing corporation and unions to once again donate huge sums to political parties – would increase corruption or the appearance of corruption and further distort our political processes.”

Wilson pointed to a number of other proposals – from new controls on foreign corporations to public financing – that Congress should consider in seeking to block corruption of American democracy



Book Sale Chair Lena Packer and her committee are hard at work planning this spring's Used

Book Sale, which is our League's main funding source. Details are still being worked out, but it appears that the Sale will be over the weekend of April 23-25 at Westland Mall. Book transport day --- the day where the books are collected from members' garages and basements and brought to the Mall - will be on Saturday, March 20. We have always been fortunate to have many husbands help on this day, and their strength and energy have helped make this job go very quickly. If you can participate on March 20th, please let Lena know (734-420-4439) or pengldy1@wowway.com.

The most important help you can provide right now is collecting books. We know that the best, most saleable books are those we receive from League members, their friends and families. If you cannot store books or need help with a collection, please let Lena know and her committee will jump in and help.

The committee also needs your help in saving bags for purchased books as well as brown bags used at the Sunday “Bag Sale” day. One of the results of our growing use of recyclable tote bags for our groceries is that disposable bags used at our Sale are not as plentiful!

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Plans for our official 50th Anniversary **celebration on May 22nd** are moving forward. Invitations to our luncheon at Western Golf and Country Club will be sent to members, League supporters, and community leaders. Members are also welcome to invite friends and families. Please hold the date so that you can be part of this fun event.

A lovely display of the League's history and purpose has been prepared by Joan Gebhardt, with help from Roberta Young. Joan and Roberta scanned many old documents and photos from the League's archives. The **display boards** made their debut at our February membership meeting and are currently set up at the Livonia Civic Center Library. Next month, they will appear at the Plymouth Library, and we hope to have the display travel to all of the libraries in our service area through the end of the year. This display is a visual reminder to the community of our public service.

One of the most ambitious ways of celebrating our 50th anniversary is our League's participation in the **Plymouth 4th of July Parade**. Plymouth's parade begins at 7:30 am, and draws many visitors. The plan is for League members to march the 1/2 mile parade route dressed in white, as the suffragettes did. The front marchers will carry a LWV banner, and others will carry signs to remind those watching of our purpose (i.e., "Providing 50 years of Voter Service", "Non-Partisan Candidate Information.", etc). We also hope to have at least one convertible or classic car that will hold a limited number of members who cannot walk the parade route. (And if you know of anyone who can provide a convertible or classic car, we need to hear from you!)

We want to appear as a strong organization, so it is important to have the commitment of a good number of members who want to participate. If you can be a part of this exciting day, please contact Paula Bowman soon so we know whether we have enough members to go forward. Participants will need to furnish their own white costumes/outfits (pants are ok). We will provide sashes and the signage. Please let Paula know if you are able to join us.



*Suffrage parade,  
NY City, May, 1913*

## NEWS FROM LWVMI IN LANSING

- State board members will be the first recipients of 2 planned training sessions by a public relations firm, who will work with the board on development of the League's key messages, and speaking to the media and community leaders. A second training session will be offered in late March for local League members. If you're interested, please contact Paula Bowman.
- LWVMI was involved in a February 9th "Fair and Impartial Courts" symposium held at Wayne State University that featured Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. The League will be working with the sponsoring groups to further this cause.
- A committee of board members is working to update and improve the LWVMI's website. This is a challenging and expensive task, but in this age of on-line media, it is an unavoidable expense. Watch for the new website launch later this year.
- Current LWVMI Board member and former LWVMI President, Pat Donath, has been nominated as a member of the 2010-12 LWVUS Board of Directors. Pat will be elected at the May convention in Atlanta.
- Planning is already underway to provide Voter Guides for the state and national races in 2010. LWVMI Voter Service Chair, Eva Packard, is seeking funding for the project, and is exploring options for the on-line voter guides.
- LWVMI is participating in events on Equal Pay Day in Lansing—April 20th—along with other groups (NOW, AAUW, BPW, MI Women's Commission, Pay Equity Network, Women Lawyers and National Council of Jewish Women). If you'd like more information about the day's agenda or would like to be one of the League representatives, please call the LWVMI office at 517-484-5383.

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