



PO Box 3832, Ann Arbor Michigan, 48102-3832

2024-2025 Annual Report



Table of Contents

2024-2025 Officers, Directors, and Nominating Committee.....	3
Order of Business.....	4
Minutes of Annual Business Meeting May 2024.....	5-7
Treasurer’s Report.....	8
Education Fund Annual Report Calendar Year 2024-25.....	9
Income Pie Chart Fiscal Year 2024-25.....	10
Expenses Pie Chart Fiscal Year 2024-25.....	11
Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2025-26.....	12-13
Proposed Bylaws amendment for 2025-26.....	14-23
Proposed Programs for 2025-26.....	24-25
Slate of Nominees for Officers and Directors and Nominating Committee 2025-2027.....	26
Biographies of Officers and Directors Nominees.....	27-30
Annual Reports	
President’s Report.....	31-32
Vice President’s Report.....	33
Advocacy Committee.....	34-40
Communications Committee.....	41-43
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.....	44-45
Membership Committee.....	46
Programs.....	47
Voter Services Committee.....	48-55
Presentation Coordinator.....	56-57
Student Leaders of Voter Services.....	58
Volunteer Recognition.....	59-65
Appendix I: List of LWV-WC Presidents.....	66-68
Appendix 2: Federal Judiciary Study Report.....	69

**League of Women Voters Washtenaw County
2024-2025 Officers, Directors, and Nominating Committee**

Officers

President	Lynne Kochmanski
Vice President	Catherine Murau
Treasurer	Betty Bishop
Secretary	Jean Becker, interim

Directors

Advocacy	Sandra Sorini Elser
Communications	Betsy Nisbet
Education Fund	Betty Bishop
Voter Services	Rebecca Shiemke
Membership	Mary Ann McGee
Program	Lauren Hornberger
Student Leaders of Voter Services	Bavani Vijay/Juliana Ramirez

2024 – 2025 Nominating Committee

Donna Snyder, Chair
Gwen Alexander
Mary Ann McGee (Board appointed liaison)

League of Women Voters Washtenaw County

May 20, 2025

Order of Business

Call to Order and Welcome Lynne Kochmanski

Appointment of Parliamentarian/Secretary Lynne Kochmanski

Standing Rules

1. Voting members must be signed in by 6:45 pm.
2. Members may speak to a motion for up to two minutes.
3. No member shall speak more than once to a motion until all members who wish to speak have been heard.
4. A majority of those present and voting at the Annual Meeting shall be required for election of officers, directors and members of the nominating committee, and adoption of the budget and bylaws amendment.

Approval of Agenda and Standing Rules - Motion #1 Betty Bishop

Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes, May 2024 – Motion #2 Rebecca Shiemke

Treasurer’s Report Betty Bishop

Approval of Proposed Budget, 2025-2026 – Motion #3 Betty Bishop

Approval of Bylaws Amendment, 2025-2026 – Motion #4 Catherine Murau

Approval of Proposed Program, 2025-2026 – Motion #5 Lauren Hornberger

Present Nominating Committee Slate Mary Ann McGee

Nominations From the Floor and Election Lynne Kochmanski

Recognitions Lynne Kochmanski
Catherine Murau

Suggestions to the Board Lynne Kochmanski

Adjournment Lynne Kochmanski

Keynote Speaker Introduction Lynne Kochmanski



**Annual Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2024**

Board Attendance: Lynne Kochmanski, President; Catherine Murau, Vice President; Betty Bishop, Treasurer; Sandra Sorini Elser, Advocacy Director; Shelley Schanfield, Communications Director; Cheryl Depner, Observer Corp Director; Rebecca Shiemke, Voter Services Director; Rose Reilly, Student Leaders of Voter Service Director

Meeting Called to Order by Lynne Kochmanski at 7:00 PM

Opening Message: Lynne Kochmanski introduced Board members in attendance as well as four past presidents: Joan Sampieri, Nancy Schewe, Sue Smith and Zoe Behnke. Kochmanski shared that LWV-WC continued its strong membership with 253 members and growing. LWV-WC is one of the largest local leagues in the state of Michigan, and a highly active league, leading by example in many areas. Kochmanski encouraged everyone to read the annual report and told attendees that they will be amazed at what our league chapter has accomplished. Kochmanski reminded us that “democracy remains under attack, and we need to be ever vigilant in protecting it.”

Appointment of Parliamentarian and Secretary: Kochmanski appointed Betty Bishop as the parliamentarian for this meeting and Rebecca Shiemke as the secretary for this meeting. After Kochmanski explained to attendees the definition of a quorum, Bishop certified that a quorum was present.

Standing Rules: Kochmanski gave an overview of the standing rules.

Motion #1: Approve Agenda and Standing Rules: Bishop motioned for approval of the agenda and standing rules and Catherine Murau seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Motion carried.**

Motion #2: Approve Minutes from 2024 Annual Meeting: Shiemke motioned for approval of the minutes from the 2023 Annual Meeting and Cheryl Depner seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer’s Report: Presented by Betty Bishop, Treasurer

Bishop assured members we are in very good shape financially. Bishop reported that membership dues were the largest source of income. Bishop explained expenses, including the

National and State Conventions, and PMP, a portion of member dues that are remitted to LWVUS and LWVMI for advocacy and voter services.

Year-to-Date, 2022-23 budget and proposed budget for 2023-24. Bishop provided an overview of the proposed budget for 2024-25. Some of the highlights included: Income came primarily from membership dues, gifts and grants. Membership dues were the largest source of income. The largest expenses were the PMP paid to LWVMI and LWVUS and expenses related to Voter Services activities. The proposed budget for Voter Services is higher because 2024 is a major election year. Bishop reminded attendees that the full printed budgets are also located in the annual report.

Motion #3: Betty Bishop motioned for approval of the 2024-2025 Budget. No second was needed. **Motion Carried.**

Motion #4: Approve 2024-25 Bylaws Amendment: Copies of the bylaws with the proposed amendment were provided at each table and emailed to members. The bylaws are being amended to reflect LWVUS changes going into effect in 2025 regarding membership that were voted on in 2023 at the national convention. **Catherine Murau motioned to approve the bylaws change.** Betty Bishop seconded the motion. **Discussion: none. Motion carried.**

Motion #5: Approve 2024-35 Program: Sandra Sorini Elser motioned to approve the 2024-2025 Program. Sue Smereck seconded the motion. **Discussion: none. Motion carried.**

Present Slate of Nominations and Election: Kochmanski introduced the 2024-2025 slate of nominees: Officers: Vice President: Catherine Murau, Treasurer: Betty Bishop. Directors: Advocacy: Sandra Sorini Elser, Communications: Betsy Nisbet, Membership: Mary Ann McGee Program: Lauren Hornberger. Nominating Committee: Donna Snyder, Gwen Alexander. Kochmanski asked if there were any nominations from the floor and there were not. **As there were no objections, Kochmanski directed the secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate as presented.**

Recognitions and Awards:

Recognition of Retiring Local Board Members: Kochmanski recognized retiring board members, Director of Communications, Shelley Schanfield and Observer Corp Director, Cheryl Depner (both present) and celebrated Schanfield and Depner for their tireless and excellent contributions in their roles.

Defender of Democracy Awards: Catherine Murau announced the winners of this award. Maria Abrahamsen (present) was honored for her excellent work as co-chair of the candidate forum subcommittee and the note-taker for the Voter Services committee. Marge Swan

(present) was honored for her work organizing the fall WCC voter registration drive and bi-annual tabling at the Ann Arbor Art Fair, in addition to chairing the nominating committee. Anne Jackson (present) was honored for her work chairing the Vote411 subcommittee and for volunteering at voter registration events, tabling, Public Accuracy Tests and candidate forums. Aurelie Atowo (not present), a high school member of Student Leader of Voter Services, was honored for her voter registration button and sticker designs, high school voter registration volunteer, and creating and putting content on TikTok. Alison Ulicny (not present) was honored for her work as a member of the Communications Team and for her technical help as assistant webmaster assisting our advocacy teams with webpage development.

Local Volunteer Recognition: Kochmanski thanked the many volunteers who have made the work of LWV-WC so successful and noted that at the end of our annual report is a full listing of all volunteers who have contributed to the league's work this past year. Board members and officers are not on the list as they have worked tirelessly in every aspect of the league's mission. Kochmanski pointed out that almost half of our roster has volunteered time to the league and recognized all volunteers present.

Sad News: Kochmanski reported that Dr. Deborah Turner, LWVUS president, passed away unexpectedly in January 2024. Sue Smith, past LWV-WC president, former LWVMI board member, and a LWVUS nominating chair who worked with Dr. Turner, shared remarks about Dr. Turner's accomplishments and service to the LWV. Smith described Dr. Turner as an advocate for voting rights and women's rights, and in her words, "we will keep on keeping on."

Suggestions to the Board: No additional suggestions were provided by attendees. Kochmanski encouraged attendees to make suggestions at any time.

Adjournment: Betty Bishop motioned to adjourn the annual meeting. Cheryl Depner seconded the motion. Kochmanski adjourned the meeting at 7:37 PM.

Keynote Speaker: Rose Reilly introduced our speaker, Barbara McQuade.

Closing Remarks: Kochmanski thanked the Garden Mill for the flower centerpieces and Serendipity Books for managing the sale and signing of Barbara McQuade's book, "Attack from Within."

Kochmanski ended by presenting a token of LWV-WC's appreciation to Rose Reilly, Director of Student Leaders of Voter Services, for her dedication and hard work over the past 5 years defending democracy.

**Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Rebecca Shiemke, Acting Board Secretary**

TREASURER'S REPORT

This report includes the approved current budget for 2024-25, the actual receipts and disbursements for the first nine months of 2024-25, and the proposed budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The budget committee (Joan Sampieri, Lynne Kochmanski, Catherine Murau, and Betty Bishop) met in March 2025. The budget for 2025-26 is considerably less than in 2024-25. This is due to 2025-26 being a year with no major elections during the fiscal year. We expect significantly more expenses and income in 2026-27 which is a major election year. We do expect that the Board will need to adjust the budget during the fiscal year as we see how the League can best function in these changing times.

LWV-WC Fund Activity for the Calendar Year 2024

	Checking	Ed Fund	Reserve/Savings	PayPal
Balance 1/1/24	\$24,985	\$59,934	\$41,063	\$950
Income	\$42,163	\$1,005	\$3	\$13,103
Outgoing	\$42,224	\$11,880	\$5,000 (moved to checking)	\$13,603
Balance 12/31/24	\$24,924	\$49,059	\$36,066	\$450

Notes: Because we do cash-based accounting there were checks written in late December 2024 which were not deposited until January 2025; this is the reason for the large checking account balance as of 12/31/2024. PayPal is used for collecting dues and payments for events (parties, Lunch and Learn) and sales as well as donations. A balance is maintained in the PayPal account so refunds can be made if necessary (i.e., cancellation of an event). The Fund Activity report is done for the calendar year 2024 since the Ed Fund reports from LWVUS come out 4 times a year in March, June, September, and December and cover through the quarter which ended three months before. In April 2023, \$50,100* was moved from the Reserve/Savings account to an investment account at Baird and used to purchase a 12-month CD paying 5%. This was rolled over into a 10-month CD at a similar rate in April 2024. This was rolled over into a 12-month CD at 4.25% in March 2025.

-Betty Bishop, Treasurer

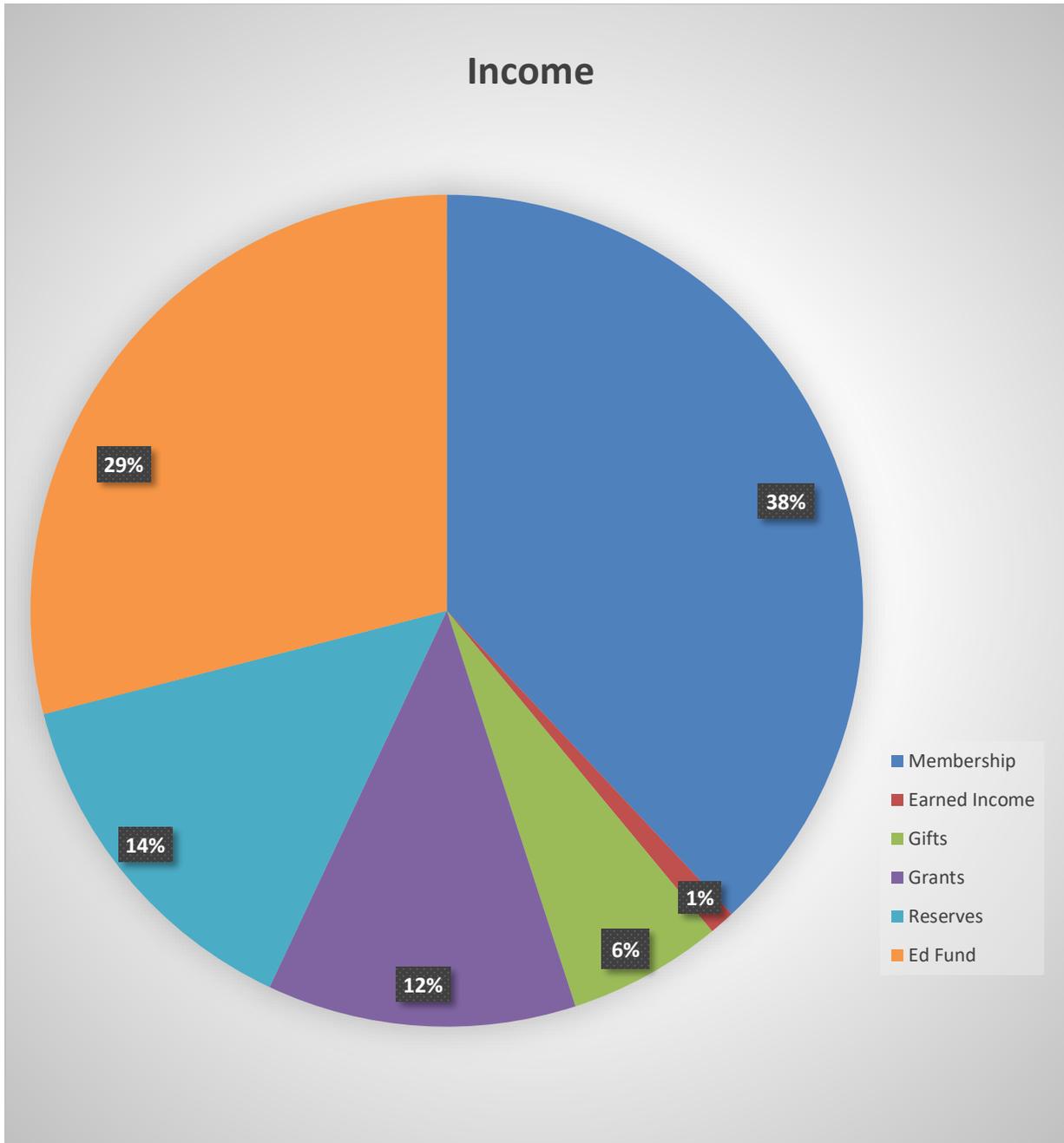
EDUCATION FUND REPORT 2024-25

The Education Fund allows donors to make tax-deductible donations to the LWV-WC if the checks are made out to the LWV-WC Education Fund. This fund is managed for the LWV-WC by the LWV-US Education Fund which is a 501 (c) 3 fund. This fund is used for public education including voter education and voter registration. During the past year the fund was used for voter education, including candidate forums, Voters Guides, Vote 411, and similar programs. Contributions to the fund in 2024 were \$1,005 while withdrawals totaled \$11,880. This high level of withdrawals is typical for a Presidential election year. It is likely to be much less in 2025 when there are no major elections.

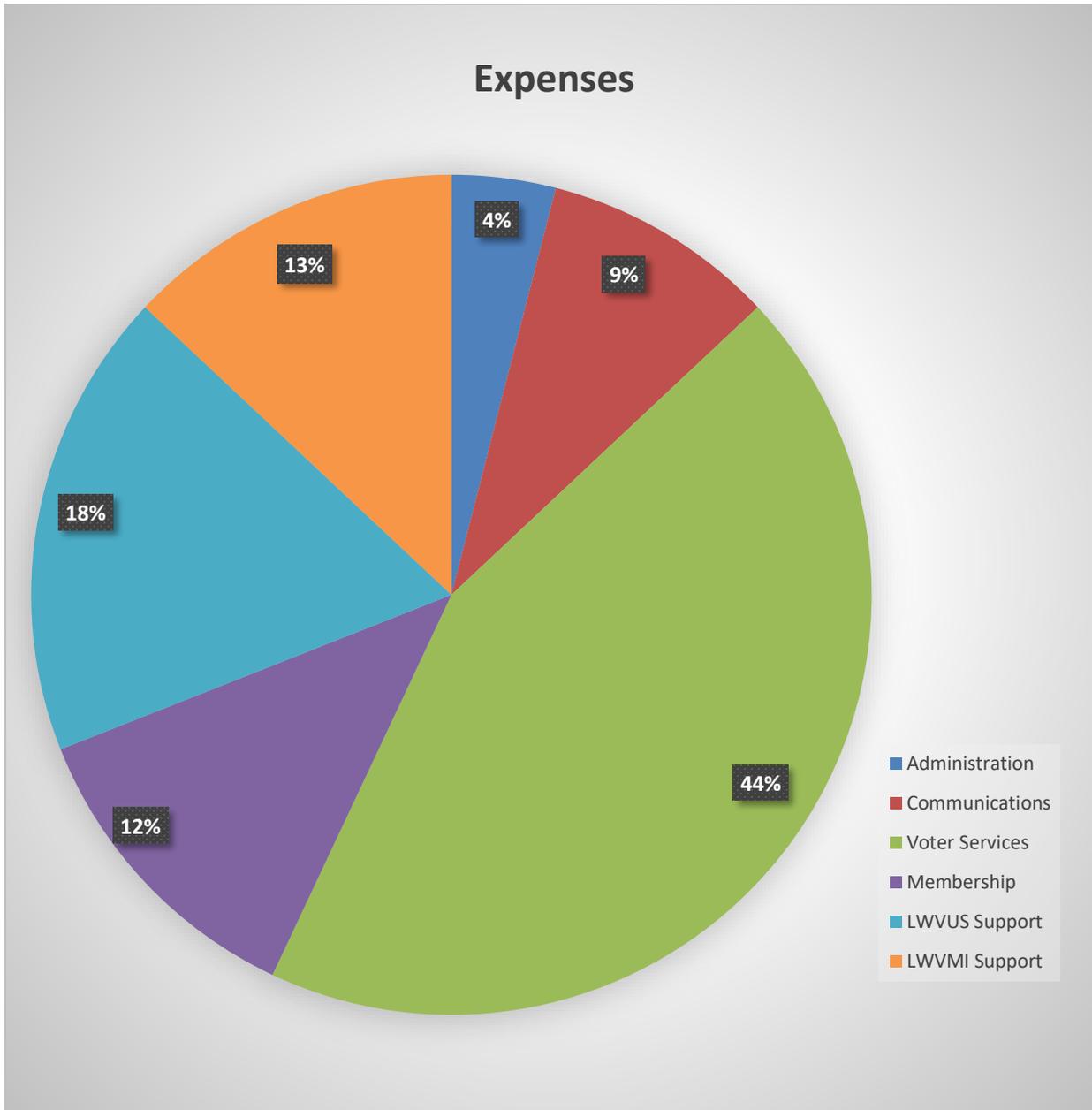
-Betty Bishop, Treasurer

LWV-WC FISCAL YEAR 2024

INCOME THROUGH MARCH 31, 2025



LWV-WC FISCAL YEAR 2024
EXPENSES THRU MARCH 31, 2025



LWV-WC Proposed FY 2025 Budget
For the Period July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026
With YTD July 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025

INCOME	YEAR TO DATE	BUDGET 2024-25	PROPOSED 2025-26
Membership Dues	\$ 14,936	\$ 15,000	\$ 3,500
Gifts	\$ 2,182	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Grants	\$ 4,600	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,000
Development	\$ 0	\$ 500	\$ 1,000
Earned Income	\$ 400	\$ 700	\$ 700
Program: Lunch & Learn	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Miscellaneous	\$	\$ 250	\$ 250
Sales	\$ 82	\$ 200	\$ 250
Voter Services: YEO	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Transfer: Ed Fund	\$ 11,332	\$ 18,000	\$ 6,000
Transfer: Reserves	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,803	\$ 22,626
TOTAL INCOME:	\$ 38,532	\$ 45,453	\$ 38,326
EXPENSES	YEAR TO DATE	BUDGET 2024-25	PROPOSED 2025-26
Administration: Board	\$ 292	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Administration: Insurance	\$ 203	\$ 350	\$ 350
Administration: P.O. Box	\$ 170	\$ 180	\$ 180
Administration: PayPal Charge	\$ 543	\$ 600	\$ 100
Administration: Postage	\$ 45	\$ 100	\$ 100
Administration: Quicken	\$ 72	\$ 75	\$ 90
Administration: Stripe	\$ 39	\$ 0	\$ 300
Advocacy:			
Publicity/Refreshments	\$ 0	\$ 250	\$ 150
Advocacy: Room Rental	\$ 0	\$ 200	\$ 100
Advocacy:			
Speakers/Transportation	\$ 0	\$ 100	\$ 300
Advocacy: Sponsorships	\$ 100	\$ 200	\$ 200
Communications: Constant Contact	\$ 636	\$ 780	\$ 780
Communications: Domain Name	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 50
Communications: G Suite	\$ 261	\$ 300	\$ 380
Communications: Signup Genius	\$ 108	\$ 110	\$ 121
Communications Technology	\$ 39	\$ 200	\$ 300
Communications Website	\$ 425	\$ 450	\$ 450
Communications Zoom (storage)	\$ 360	\$ 780	\$ 660

Conventions and Workshops: National	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 3,000
Conventions and Workshops: State	\$ 1,050	\$ 3,000	\$ 0
Conventions and Workshops: Other	\$ 0	\$ 350	\$ 350
Development: Events	\$ 0	\$ 150	\$ 150
LWV Support: PMP-US	\$ 6,480	\$ 6,500	\$ 7,036
LWV Support: PMP-MI	\$ 4,657	\$ 4,700	\$ 5,121
LWV Support: Lake Michigan LWV	\$ 53	\$ 53	\$ 53
Membership: Annual Meeting	\$ 1,299	\$ 500	\$ 3,000
Membership: Annual Report	\$ 0	\$ 50	\$ 50
Membership: DEI	\$ 900	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,000
Membership Meetings	\$ 0	\$ 400	\$ 400
Membership: Printing and Postage	\$ 232	\$ 500	\$ 500
Membership: Tabling Events and Displays	\$ 0	\$ 500	\$ 400
Membership: Training	\$ 0	\$ 150	\$ 150
Membership: T-Shirts	\$ 1,228	\$ 1,200	\$ 0
Observer Corps	\$ 54	\$ 225	\$ 100
Program: Program Planning Meeting	\$ 0	\$ 100	\$ 2,000
Program: Partnerships & Honoraria	\$ 0	\$ 100	\$ 100
Program: Printing	\$ 0	\$ 100	\$ 100
Voter Services: Advertising	\$ 65	\$ 100	\$ 100
Voter Services: Art Fair	\$ 0	\$ 200	\$ 230
Voter Services: Candidate Forums	\$ 300	\$ 500	\$ 500
Voter Services: H.S. Leaders Group	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,600	\$ 2,600
Voter Services: Miscellaneous	\$ 0	\$ 200	\$ 275
Voter Services: Printing	\$ 2,705	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Voter Services: Special Events	\$ 410	\$ 600	\$ 1,500
Voter Services: YEO	\$ 119	\$ 600	\$ 700
Voter Services: Voter Guides	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 0
Voter Services Vote411	\$ 3,196	\$ 4,400	\$ 300
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 35,046	\$ 45,453	\$ 38,326

**PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE – LWV-WC
2025-2026**

BYLAWS OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS WASHTENAW COUNTY

Proposed May 2025

MISSION STATEMENT. *The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

ARTICLE I: Name

Sec. 1. Name. The name of this organization is the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and of the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

ARTICLE II: Purposes and Policies

Sec. 1. Purposes. The purposes of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County:

1. promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and
2. to act on selected government issues.

Sec. 2. Policies. The policies of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County:

1. Political Policy. The League of Women Voters Washtenaw County shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
2. Diversity, equity, and inclusion policy. The League is fully committed to ensure compliance-in principle and in practice – with LWVUS’ diversity, equity, and inclusion policy.

ARTICLE III: Membership

Sec. 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. 2. Types of Membership. ~~The membership of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County shall be composed of voting members and associate members.~~

~~a. Voting Members. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues, and of the LWVUS; (1) those who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members at large; (3) those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues. Those who are students are defined as individuals enrolled either as full or part time with an accredited institution.~~

~~b. Associate Members. All others who join the League shall be associate members.~~

1. **Voting Members.** Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of the local and state Leagues of their place of joining and of the LWVUS. Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members, excused from the payment of dues. Those who are students are defined as individuals enrolled as full or part time with an accredited institution.
2. **Associate Members.** All others who join the League shall be associate members.

ARTICLE IV: Officers

Sec. 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers. The officers of the League of Women Voters ~~the Ann Arbor Area~~ **Washtenaw County** shall consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The officers shall be elected by the general membership at the annual meeting and take office on July 1, following the annual meeting.

- ~~Election shall be for a two-year term, with the President and Secretary elected in alternate years from the Vice President and Treasurer.~~ Election shall be for a two-year

term for President and Secretary, elected in alternate years from Treasurer. The Vice-President shall be elected each year for a 1-year term.

Sec. 2. The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and the board of directors. The president may, in the event of the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president shall be an ex officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. The president shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and shall perform such other duties as may be designated by the board. The president shall be the official spokesperson for the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County.

Sec. 3. The Vice-President. The vice-president shall in the event of the absence, disability, resignation, or death of the president, possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office until the next annual meeting. In the event that the vice-president is unable to serve in this capacity, the board of directors shall elect one of its members to fill the vacancy. The vice-president shall perform such other duties as the president and board may designate.

Sec.4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of the annual meeting and meetings of the board of directors. The secretary shall notify all officers and directors of their election. The secretary shall sign, with the president, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Sec. 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due. The treasurer shall be the custodian of these monies, deposit them in a bank designated by the board of directors and disburse funds in a timely manner. The treasurer shall present statements to the board at its regular meetings and an annual report at the annual meeting. The financial books shall be reviewed at least biennially.

ARTICLE V: Board of Directors

Sec. 1. The board of directors of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County shall consist of the officers of the League, at least three elected directors, and not more than five appointed directors. The elected directors shall be elected by the general membership at the annual meeting and take office on July 1, following the annual meeting.

Elected directors shall serve for two-year terms. Appointed directors shall serve a one-year term.

A new League unit formed under the mentorship of LWVWC may have one voting representative to the board.

Sec. 2. Qualifications. Persons elected or appointed to serve as an officer or director of this organization shall be a voting member of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County.

Sec. 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring on the board of directors or officers, other than the office of president, may be filled by appointment until the next annual meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors. A vacancy in the office of the president or in another office that has become vacant, shall be filled as provided in Article IV, Sec. 3.

Sec. 4. Powers and Duties. The board of directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instruction of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program as adopted by the national convention, the state convention, and the annual meeting, or as adopted by extraordinary procedure as provided in Article IX, Sec. 4. The board shall issue an annual report of the activities of the organization.

Sec. 5. Meetings. There shall be at least six regular meetings of the board of directors annually. The president may call special meetings of the board of directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board.

Sec. 6. Quorum. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 7. Expedited Decisions. When timely decisions are required, email, conference calls, phone polling, text messaging, video conferencing, or other technological methods shall be acceptable meeting alternatives. Decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

ARTICLE VI: Notice, Attendance, and Voting

Sec. 1. Notice may be given by U.S. mail or electronic means.

Sec. 2. Attendance at meetings may be in-person or remote.

Sec. 3. Voting may be either in-person or through electronic means by members present.

ARTICLE VII: Financial Administration

Sec. 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County shall begin July 1 and extend through June 30 of the following calendar year.

Sec. 2. Dues

~~a. Annual dues, as determined at the annual meeting, shall be due from all members except those who have attained life membership.~~

~~b. The board may establish student dues.~~

~~c. Scholarship dues may be available to an active member at the discretion of the President and/or Treasurer.~~

~~LWV of Washtenaw County will conform to the Unified Dues Model to be implemented by LWVUS in 2025. Upon implementation, said model will supersede the section(s) of these bylaws that contradict that model. Specific new bylaw language regarding dues will be adopted in 2025.~~ Members shall pay dues in accordance with LWV-US policy.

Sec. 3. Budget Committee. A budget committee of at least four members shall be appointed by the board of directors at least two months prior to the annual meeting. The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the budget committee, but ineligible to serve as chair. At least one member of the budget committee shall not be a member of the board of directors.

Sec. 4. Budget. The proposed budget shall be sent to all members at least two weeks before the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: Meetings

Sec. 1. General Membership Meetings. There shall be at least four meetings of the general membership each year which may include the annual meeting, co-sponsored events, townhall meetings, special business meetings, etc.

Sec. 2. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the general membership shall be held on or before May 31, the exact date to be determined by the board of directors for the purpose of:

- a. approval of minutes from previous year's annual meeting
- b. adopting a local program
- c. electing officers, directors, and members of the nominating committee

- d. adopting an adequate budget
- e. transacting such other business as may properly come before the membership

Sec. 3. Quorum. Voting members present at a general membership or annual meeting shall constitute a quorum if the membership has been duly notified of the proposed agenda. A majority of those voting members present shall be required to enact such business as may come before the membership.

ARTICLE IX: Nominations and Elections

Sec. 1. Nominating committee. The nominating committee shall consist of at least three members. Two members, neither of whom are members of the board, shall be elected at the annual meeting. After the annual meeting, the board shall appoint one of its members to the committee. The committee shall select its own chair from the members of the committee. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the board.

Sec. 2 The nominating committee shall have and implement a plan for recruiting candidates for board positions.

Sec. 3. Report of the nominating committee and nominations from the floor. The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers, elected directors, and members of the nominating committee shall be sent to all members two weeks before the date of the annual meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented at the annual meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by a voting member provided the consent of the nominee shall have been secured.

Sec. 4. Elections. The elections shall be held by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Voting may be either in-person or through electronic means by members present. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE X: Principles and Program

Sec. 1. Authorization. The principles, adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of the program.

Sec. 2. Program. The program of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County shall consist of:

- a. Action to implement the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States.
- b. Study of governmental issues chosen by the membership and action to implement positions on those issues.

Sec. 3. Action by the Annual Meeting. The annual meeting shall act upon the program using the following procedures:

- a. The board of directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by the voting members at least two months prior to the annual meeting and shall formulate a proposed program.
- b. The proposed program shall be sent to all members two weeks before the annual meeting.
- c. A majority vote of those present and voting at the annual meeting shall be required for the adoption of subjects in the proposed program as presented at the annual meeting by the board of directors. Voting may be either in-person or through electronic means by members present.
- d. Any recommendation for the program submitted by a voting member to the board of directors at least two months prior to the annual meeting, but not approved by the board, may be adopted at the annual meeting by a three-fifths vote of members present and voting, provided consideration is ordered by a majority vote of members present and voting.

Sec. 4. Extraordinary Procedure. In the case of altered, extraordinary conditions arising between annual meetings, changes in the program may be made, provided that extraordinary procedures, authorized in Article V, Sec. 4, are used only when the issue is of such serious and urgent nature that members believe it must be dealt with before the next regular program adoption time.

a. Information concerning the proposed change in program shall be sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which time the change is to be discussed and any amendments to the proposed change added.

b. Final action on the proposed change shall be taken at a succeeding general meeting to be held not sooner than one month after the discussion meeting. At least two weeks prior to the final action meeting, the nature and reason for the proposed change, and a summary of the arguments for and against the proposal shall be provided to the membership. For the final vote, the proposed change shall be in substantially the same form as outlined in the notice to the membership.

c. A three-fifths vote of all voting members present and voting shall be required for adoption of any change.

Sec. 5. Member Action. Although only the president is authorized to speak on behalf of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County, members shall act in the name of the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County if authorized to do so by the president or the board of directors.

Sec. 6. Local League Action. The League of Women Voters Washtenaw County may act only in conformity with, or not contrary to, the position taken by the League of Women Voters of Michigan and/or by the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Sec. 7. Program Record. A program record shall be maintained, which includes all the issues that the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County has worked on in the past.

ARTICLE XI: National Convention, State Convention, and Council

Sec. 1. National Convention. The board of directors, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the national office, shall select delegates to the convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Sec. 2. State Convention. The board of directors, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office, shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

Sec. 3. State Council. In the event that the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of Michigan determines that there should be a state council, the board of directors of LWVWC, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office, shall select delegates to that council in the number allotted the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County under the provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

ARTICLE XII: Parliamentary Authority

Sec. 1. Parliamentary Authority. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII: Amendments

Sec. 1. Amendments. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the annual meeting or a special meeting called by the board of directors, provided that the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Voting may be either in-person or through electronic means by members present.

PROPOSED PROGRAM – LWV-WC 2025-2026

League program is the education and advocacy platform that we adopt to move our mission forward. The LWVUS is an organization dedicated to empowering voters and defending democracy and will continue to work to protect and expand voting rights and challenge those who seek to undermine democratic principles and processes. “Women Defend Democracy” is the new programmatic focus for the League in 2025, centering people power and moving our country towards a stronger, multi-racial democracy. Through the “Women Defend Democracy” campaign, the League will work to:

- Provide Democracy Education & Election Administration Support
- Restore and Defend Voting Rights Protections
- Abolish the Electoral College
- Protect Democracy Organizations & Institutions
- Fight for Reproductive Freedoms

LWV-WC filled the Program Director position in 2024 and reevaluated our local program in January 2025. A group of LWV-WC members is participating in the Federal Judiciary Study addressing Article 3 of the Constitution of the United States, which involves the federal judges and federal courts including the Supreme Court. The study addresses concerns and looks for clarification on judicial accountability, transparency, independence and ethics.

LWV – WC PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES

1. Focus on implications of how people are impacted locally by government based on decisions at the national level with new administration.
2. Create greater connection and engagement with members to the mission of LWV WC and informing and educating the public as appropriate.
3. Provide education on how people might inform themselves with reliable, accurate and relevant sources of information (combat mis/dis information).
4. Align with the topics approved by membership.
5. Partner with other organizations, when possible, for maximum visibility and participation.
6. Incorporate DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) as foundational and included in program design.

PROPOSED PROGRAMS:

The proposed programs will remain consistent from 2024-2025, including:

- Voter Services
- Health Care
- Environmental Protection/Climate
- Firearms Safety
- Juvenile Justice and Justice for All
- Voting Rights and Democracy
- Money in Politics
- Youth Engagement

-Lauren Hornberger, Program Director

**SLATE OF NOMINEES – LWV-WC
OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

2025-2027

***Officers:**

President: Catherine Murau

Secretary: Jean Becker

Directors:

Voter Services: Rebecca Shiemke

Observer Corps: Holly Blais

***Nominating Committee 2025-2026:**

Donna Snyder, Chair

Melanie McIntosh, member

Submitted by 2024-2025 Nominating Committee

Donna Snyder, Chair

Gwen Alexander

Mary Ann McGee, Board liaison

BIOGRAPHIES

LWV-WC SLATE OF NOMINEES



Catherine Murau: A Minnesota native, I've lived in Michigan since 1993 and Ann Arbor since 1996. Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) has been my lifelong profession, which started in the Peace Corps in Costa Rica in the late 1980s and continues today on a part-time scale. My husband is an automotive engineer, which has given us the opportunity to live abroad in Germany, Japan, and China. During each assignment, I taught English as a Second Language both full and part-time.

Upon returning to the USA in 2016, I wanted to become a better and more involved community member and looked for organizations that aligned with my interests. I joined the League in 2017 and started small, taking photos of ballot drop boxes for League members and also participating in a statewide League consensus study regarding the lame duck sessions in Lansing. Later I was asked to co-chair the candidate forums subcommittee and have worked on these during the past two election cycles. Candidate forums offer a chance to contact elected officials and candidates, work with co-sponsors in the community, and to find out what issues people care about.

Serving as Vice-President for the past 3 years has also given me a way to expand my knowledge and to contribute to the League and the community. Working with our President Lynne Kochmanski has been an honor and a pleasure. If elected to the office of President, I'm excited to continue serving to the best of my ability. Our work is more important now than ever.



Jean Becker: Although I am one of those unusual folks born in Ann Arbor, I lived for many years in Brighton because it was "in the middle" as I changed positions and locations in my 30-year career with the State of Michigan, and my husband did the same working for General Motors. I served on the Boan County Voters Voice, which dissolved when the LWV became more active and undertook many of the same projects. I rejoined the League to help establish the Livingston County

League and then moved back to Ann Arbor recently. While in Brighton I was an elections precinct Co-Chair for a number of years.

I have always believed that democracy works best when voters are informed and take the time to vote in every election. I have volunteered on campaigns and citizen's initiatives since high school, most recently with Voters Not Politicians, which fundamentally altered making the Michigan Legislature reflect the citizens of Michigan. I believe the last few elections have brought an increased awareness of the need for accurate, issue and policy-based voter information and believe the League is a driving force to provide unbiased, fact-based candidate information. I believe this is a critical juncture for the United States and as a psychologist, I am certain that doing nothing will lead to further erosion of the goals of LWV. In Michigan, we know how making every vote count makes profound changes.

When I started to receive the LWVWC newsletter, I saw an appeal to fill an unexpected vacancy and volunteered to help. I have found the Board and women on it so inspiring I would like to continue to serve. I believe my education (Ph.D. from UM) and experience developing policy on the Boards of other groups add to the success of our Board.



Rebecca Shiemke:

I joined the League of Women Voters of Washtenaw County in January 2023 and became involved with the Voter Services Committee and the Gun Safety group of the Advocacy Committee. In June of 2023, I was chosen to be the Voter Services Director, a position I've held for two years. Until I retired in August 2022, I practiced law in Washtenaw County for nearly 25 years where I worked at the local legal aid program with a focus on family law and domestic violence. I managed a program with three attorneys and student volunteers that provided free legal assistance on family law matters to low-income residents and I provided statewide advocacy and training. In September 2022 I was appointed to the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board, which advises the legislature and the governor on issues related to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. I love reading, cooking, and gardening, and my husband and I enjoy traveling and visiting our three children and two grandsons.



Holly Blais: I am a relatively new member of the league having joined in 2024. Frustrated with the widespread disinformation about voting and elections, I was looking for a way to make a difference in my community. My first year in the League, I volunteered to help high school students register to vote and observed the canvassing of the 2024 elections. Both were very satisfying ways to feel empowered and involved. I joined the Observer Corps to learn how the local government works and to become more familiar with relevant and important local

issues.

I grew up moving all around the country (and the world) being the daughter of an Air Force fighter pilot. I graduated from the University of Michigan in 1987 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Michigan is also where I met my husband. After spending over 20 years in Texas, we moved back to Michigan in 2022. We have two adult sons: one who lives with his family in Cedar Rapids, IA and another who lives in Chicago. I am the coordinator of the Ann Arbor class of Community Bible Study, and I enjoy reading, quilting, watching U of M sports, and spending time with my husband and spoiling our two dogs.



Donna Snyder: I joined the LWV-WC in 2023 because I was concerned about where the country was headed. The increasing amount of misinformation finally got me off the sidelines. Vote411.org is what drew me to LWV-WC as I had been a user for several years and I volunteered to help get election information on Vote411.org. I consider it a reliable source that can combat the misinformation. I was happy to work on it

and spread the word to my friends to use it. I have participated in other opportunities in the League as well.

I am an attorney, and I recently retired from the University of Michigan where I worked with fundraisers, faculty, and staff on issues and agreements for charitable gifts to U-M. I enjoy outdoor activities, traveling, and spending time with my husband, family, and friends.



M. Melanie McIntosh: Joining the LWV last year was a long-awaited goal of mine ever since I sat with two League members in many legislative hearings over the years in Wisconsin. I hope that I can honor those women by trying to be an active member here in Washtenaw County. To that end, I am a new member of the Juvenile Justice Advocacy Team, the Judiciary Study, and hope to be elected to the Nominating Committee. I look forward to many challenging activities this year and in the future.

I grew up in Port Huron and Washington, D.C. and graduated from the University of Michigan in Psychology and the University of Wisconsin with a master's in social work. My career in Madison focused on public policy and community program development in the areas of juvenile justice, child protection, and elder protection. From helping to start a Runaway Center, Juvenile Public Defender unit and Youth Law Center to conducting a study of Female Adolescent Offenders, I had many occasions to write grant applications and lead multi-disciplinary projects. I was fortunate to be appointed to a variety of state and local commissions and boards.

ANNUAL REPORTS

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

“Any great change must expect opposition, because it shakes the very foundation of privilege.” – Lucretia Mott

For the past year, our league worked tirelessly to educate voters and advocate for rights and democracy. The Presidential election year was intense, and the new administration unfortunately engages daily in challenging the very tenants of our democratic values. The league is not backing down.

Beginning with our annual meeting last May, our local league focused, planned, and delivered on our mission to engage voters and defend democracy. You will note in the graphic below; we hosted 369 events.



Even in a Presidential election year, our Advocacy efforts continued with programming on juvenile justice, healthcare, money in politics, and voting rights.

Additionally, through our Voter Services efforts we built a new community relationship with the University of Michigan, registering voters and presenting about the LWV to law students. We further cemented our clerk engagement with cities, townships, and the county through observing government meetings, public accuracy tests, and board of canvasser election certification. Our league has become a sought-after partner for all things voting related. Our special events team continued to create engaging materials for use at tabling events to help educate voters, keeping in mind what voters are most interested in.

Our league members are looked to for leadership beyond our local league with members currently serving on the LWVMI Advocacy Committee, the LWVMI state board, and leading the LWVMI state networks on Climate and Observer Corps. This next year, I will be moving to the role of co-president for LWVMI, Sandy Sorini Elser, our Advocacy director will be the new VP for Advocacy for LWVMI and Anne Jackson, our Vote411 coordinator will be taking on the role of Vote411 LWVMI director.

As Michigan implemented Early Voting in 2024, our League worked in partnership with the Washtenaw County Deputy of Elections to educate voters about the new laws governing elections and absentee ballots. We also recruited poll workers to work at the 9 days of Early Voting.

This sampling of our efforts shows our continuous commitment to democracy. As you read through the thorough reports from our directors, remind yourselves that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness should be available equally to all of us.

In League, as always,



-Lynne Kochmanski, President

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Following the annual meeting last year, work continued with candidate forums with a busy Presidential election year. Co-chairing with Maria Abrahamsen, we expanded our forums to include more township races and continued to partner with local organizations to both sponsor and share forums with the community. The candidate forum work requires a great deal of effort from many League members, and we thank everyone for their contributions. Many Voter Services tabling events were scheduled, and I attended as many as possible, including as a panel member for a discussion on voting rights, and as a guest speaker at the Eastern Michigan student voting group.

As a member of the Observer Corps, I observed the County Board of Canvassers certify both the Primary and General Elections, followed the Ypsilanti City Council, and attended monthly meetings hosted by Cheryl Depner.

I continued to conduct Member Orientation, now with the great help of new Membership Chair Mary Ann McGee. We worked to streamline the procedure and make the orientations engaging and helpful to new and current members.

In preparation for the Annual Meeting, I chaired the by-laws committee, consisting of Jean Becker, Betty Bishop and Margaret Leary, and I served again on the Budget Committee with Lynne Kochmanski, Betty Bishop and Joan Sampieri.

Per guidance from LWV-US, our local League is participating in the Federal Judiciary Study, which I co-chair with past President Zoe Behnke. More than a dozen local League members serve on this committee, dedicated to studying the federal judiciary and preparing for a consensus meeting of our members. These consensus results will be combined with those of many other Leagues around the country to develop a national advocacy position on the federal judiciary and Supreme Court. This could not come at a more prescient time in our country's history.

Finally, I continue to work closely with President Lynne Kochmanski to increase my knowledge of both the local and state Leagues.

-Catherine Murau, Vice President

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

ADVOCACY



Goals of the Advocacy Committee

The goals of the Advocacy Committee are to educate our members and the public on important issues, and advocate in support of issues consistent with the League's state, national and local positions.

Our work includes:

- Educating and providing information to league members and the public about our national, state, and local positions and action needed.
- Building public opinion in support of our positions.
- Raising awareness of the scope of our advocacy.
- Building connections and collaborating with community organizations.

We currently have 27 Advocacy Committee members on our email list and more in our Advocacy interest groups. Please visit our webpage <https://my.lwv.org/michigan/washtenaw-county/advocacy> or contact advocacy@lwvashtenaw.org to join or learn more.

LWV Washtenaw Advocacy Interest Groups

The Advocacy Committee is excited to continue our education and advocacy work in 4 active Advocacy interest areas with 2 interest areas on hiatus. They are:

- Environmental Protection and Climate Change
- Juvenile Justice and Justice for All
- Money in Politics

- Voting Rights
- Health Care Reform (on hiatus)
- Firearm Safety (on hiatus)

Each of our active interest groups meets monthly to discuss issues and strategize on educational and advocacy presentations.

Statewide Advocacy Networks

One Advocacy Interest Group has started a Statewide Network throughout Michigan with support from the LWVMI Board and the LWVMI Advocacy Committee. It is:

- Environmental Protection/Climate Change <https://lwvmi.org/environment/>

Advocacy Interest Groups and Their Accomplishments.

Environmental Protection and Climate Change Advocacy Interest Group

The Environmental Advocacy Group focuses on educating the public and advocating for protection of our environment, fighting climate change, and alleviating environmental injustice.

Programs included:

The Huron River Watershed: Why we Need it and How to Protect it.



In southeastern Michigan, the Huron River watershed spans a land area of more than 900 square miles, draining water to the Huron River through hundreds of tributary creeks and streams. It spans Oakland, Livingston, Ingham, Jackson, Washtenaw, Wayne, and Monroe Counties, including 6 local Leagues.

Rebecca Esselman, Executive Director of the Huron River Watershed Council speaks about the importance of our watershed and how we can protect it.

MI Healthy Climate Plan

Julia Fields, the Deputy Climate Energy Advisor for the EGLE Office of Climate and Energy, presents about the MI Healthy Climate Plan, which lays out a pathway for Michigan to **reach 100% carbon neutrality by 2050** to avert the worst impacts of the climate crisis, create good-paying jobs, and build a healthier and more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable Michigan for all Michiganders.

Building Bipartisan Support for Climate Action

Linda Racine, Michigan Co-Coordinator of Citizens' Climate Lobby presents a program on practical ways to build bipartisanship in partisan times.

Climate Change: This is humanity's moment



Speakers: Robin Gleason, a geologist, educator, polar expert and League member, plus Jackie Goodman, and anthropologist, retired professor at Eastern Michigan University, and experienced presenter on climate change. Both are long time members of the non-profit, non-partisan 501c3 group The Climate Reality Project.

Using Native Plants to benefit our environment, wildlife, and our climate



Speaker: Carol Gagliardi from Ann Arbor Wild Ones. Two handouts featured in the video: Garden Talk and Native Plant Resources.

Juvenile Justice and Justice for All Advocacy Interest Group

The Juvenile Justice & Justice for All Team has been very active in hosting important programs

and exemplary speakers. For more information see our webpage: <https://my.lwv.org/michigan/washtenaw-county/juvenile-justice-and-justice-all>



The LWV Washtenaw County supports these priorities.

- Effective policies to eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline for Michigan’s children and young adults
- Educate and advocate for diversion and deflection in our schools and in our justice system to reduce mass incarceration and to promote public safety
- Abolish Life without parole for juvenile offenders
- Due process protections for youth suspended or expelled from school, reduce school exclusions
- Promote ‘Good Time’ Credits
- End Prison Gerrymandering
- Productivity credits legislation
- Repeal Truth in Sentencing, which dictates that a person must serve every day of the minimum sentence

To visit or volunteer with our team, contact justice@lwvashtenaw.org

Presentations by Key Experts in 2024-2025:

- May 2025, **Youth Violence Research & Prevention: Youth Empowerment Solutions**: Professor Marc Zimmerman and Kate Taelman. This presentation covered some of the statistics about youth violence, including firearm related violence and victimization. Dr. Zimmerman and Ms. Taelman will also share an overview of their efforts to address youth violence through the evidence-based Youth Empowerment Solutions after school program.
- January 2025, **Juvenile Justice Reforms resulting from the "Kids & Communities Act"**, with Kevin Mitchell, MPA, Director of Children’s Services, Washtenaw County. The reforms implemented since October 2024 include a new screening tool for kids in Washtenaw County and statewide.
- December, 2024, **Vision for Juvenile Justice Reform**, with The Honorable Jeff Irwin, State of Michigan Senator, retrospectives and aspirations.

- May 2024, **Implementing Juvenile Justice Reform**, with The Honorable Patrick J. Conlin, Chief Judge Pro-tem of the Washtenaw County Trial Court and Presiding Judge of the Family Division
- March 2024, **A Positive School Attendance Program Using Restorative Practices**, with Anne Domanski, Restorative Justice Practitioner
- January 2024, **Justice for Kids and Communities Act: Implementation Overview** with Jason Smith, Executive Director of Michigan Center for Youth Justice

Money in Politics Interest Group

The Money in Politics (MiP) Interest Group is an arm of the LWV Washtenaw Advocacy Committee, with the goal of educating the public and League members about the far-reaching effects of Money in Politics.

The MiP Interest Group has been meeting monthly for several years. The goals of the MiP Interest Groups are to educate the public on the effects of the massive amount of “dark money” in politics, its lack of transparency, and ways to combat it. We believe Campaign Finance Reform is the Gateway issue to EVERY other Issue the League supports.

MiP has published on the LWV Washtenaw website [Fast Facts on Money in Politics](#) as well as [Resources and Background Information](#) . MiP members, as individuals regularly attend Show MI the Money meetings. MiP plans to help educate League members and the public on the Michigan Secretary of State’s new [Michigan Transparency Network, MiTN](#) . This Network provides campaign finance information about people running for elected office in 2024.

MiP also plans to educate League members and the public about the B.R.I.T.E. legislation that has been recently reintroduced in the MI House and Senate. The B.R.I.T.E. Act—Bringing Reforms in Integrity, Transparency and Ethics— would increase reporting and disclosure requirements for registered lobbyists and would require state-level public officials to submit comprehensive financial records on an annual basis.

Voting Rights Advocacy Interest Group

The Voting Rights Advocacy Interest Group works to assist the League, its members and the public to **Empower Voters and Defend Democracy by:**

- Protecting free and fair elections, democratic processes and institutions
- Enhancing voting rights

- Educating voters and
- Increasing voter participation

Meetings

Our monthly meetings occur the second Monday of the Month at 7:00 P.M. on Zoom. Contact Sue Smereck at voter-rights@lwvashtenaw.org

Stop the SAVE Act and HJR B

- Both the proposed Federal SAVE Act and Michigan HJR B insert unnecessary barriers to voter registration and voting by requiring citizenship documentation for voter registration.
- There are existing safeguards; it is already illegal for noncitizens to register and vote.
- Many citizens will find this burdensome to retrieve the documentation of birth certificates or passports.

Voting Rights presentations in 2024:

- Non-partisan Primaries and Ranked Choice Voting presented by Chris Wiggins of the League of Women Voters Oakland County
- Ed Golembiewski presented Election Security in Washtenaw County to League members and the public on April 8, 2024 via Zoom.
- Margaret Leary presented Update on the Independent Redistricting Commission and the lawsuits it has faced on May 13, 2024 via Zoom.

Healthcare Reform Advocacy Interest Group. (on hiatus for now)

League of Women Voters Health Care Positions

The US health care system should provide all US residents with a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost. Basic care includes disease prevention, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute and long-term care, mental health care, and health promotion and education. Health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services and delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable, total national expenditure level.

The League of Women Voters believes that public policy must affirm the right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices and that every individual should have access to quality health care at an affordable cost.

Highlights of Reproductive Health Care History in Michigan - 2025 can be found at LWVMI.org.

Programs included:

- February 2024, Janet Olszewski, a member of the Michigan Public Health Advisory Council, presented information on the history of public health in Michigan and the Council's "Public Health Call to Action" to Michigan League members. She also suggested ways local Leagues and League members could help publicize the Public Health Departments in their own counties.

Our Advocacy members have also provided newsletter articles about the MiCare proposal, our presentations, and a national bill, the State Based Universal Health Care Act, that would streamline the ability of states to create single-payer plans.

Firearm Safety Advocacy Interest Group. (on hiatus for now)

The Firearm Safety Network focuses on educating the public about firearm safety and advocating for firearm safety legislation.

Activities in 2024:

Jan 2024: Firearm Safety Workshop, previously presented at the May LWVMI conference, was reproduced as a Zoom Presentation. Laura Seawald, M.D., from the University of Michigan Firearm Injury Prevention Institute, Christina Schlitt, LWVMI, and Susan Smith, LWVMI, presented.

Feb 2024: Alyse Folino Ley, OD, and Frank Straub, PhD. Presented: Prevent 2 Protect: The Adolescent Targeted Violence Prevention Project.

May 2024: Prepared a flyer with brief descriptions and links to further information about the new Gun Safety Laws that went into effect in February 2024. These were distributed to local libraries.

June 2024: Tabling event at the Silence the Violence Event in Ann Arbor on June 29. Distributed the above-mentioned flyer plus handouts from the VA Hospital.

-Sandra Sorini Elser, Advocacy Director

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Communications Committee Mission:

To engage our members, friends and the public in the League's mission of empowering voters and defending democracy. We disseminate information on voting logistics and voting rights; on issues studied by our own League; and on policies and initiatives supported by the state and national League. In each case we reflect the League's ability to provide information from credible sources about issues critical to voters.

During the 2024 election year, we supported Campaign Forums and asked our members "why they vote."

Committee members provided zoom tech support for 12 primary candidate forums and 13 forums for the general election. Members also edited forum videos, posted them on YouTube and shared them with CTN, Ann Arbor's local cable network. Through social media we promoted information on voting rights, locations, and ways to vote. We also initiated a mini-video campaign, through the newsletter and social media, to answer the question "why I vote." We plan to extend the use of short videos to highlight other issues



Technology is becoming an increasingly important part of communications.

The Communications Committee conducted a survey to better understand members' experience with technologies used in work for the League. Released in late summer 2024, the findings noted that many members had difficulty using Google Drive, which hosts LWV-WC content; in addition, many members cited the need for additional training.

As a result of the survey, a subcommittee, the Drive Improvement Project (DIP), was formed to improve usability for members and to review security and permissions, especially as committee members move in and out of office. DIP is now working with Communications on its file structure and will then collaborate with each committee to develop a system that fits their needs.

The Communications Committee works to extend the reach of LWV messaging:

Publicity in traditional print media. This fall our publicity lead sent press releases announcing our candidate forums, following up with links to the forum videos. We received about 40 articles or mentions in traditional media.

Social media: We continue to focus on Instagram and Facebook, while opening accounts on Substack and BlueSky.

- **Instagram** attracts Gen Z and Millennials, with 60% of users under 35 years of age, making it essential for reaching young voters and potential members. We have 634 followers on Instagram, with 352 posts since 2021 and nearly 100 this year. www.instagram.com/lvwwashtenaw/
- **Facebook** has been the most popular social media platform, though YouTube recently surpassed it in the US. It has over 3 billion monthly active users, with the largest group at 25-34 years of age, attracting 31% of its users. In the fall, our posts focused on the election; more recently we have highlighted resources for fact checking as well as articles offering credible information on issues affecting our democracy. We have 1.2K followers and 1.1K likes since 2013.

www.facebook.com/LWVWashtenaw

We used social media to support two LWV US campaigns:

#Light4Democracy: Our members posted photos of candles burning in windows, as a sign of solidarity to defend democracy during the President's address to Congress.

Hands Off! Our Democracy: Leagues across the nation gathered on April 5 in state capitols and other towns to Rally for Democracy, telling the government to take their hands off our health care, public schools, Social Security and our right to vote.

- **YouTube:** We showcase videos of Candidate Forums as well as presentations on such topics as climate change, money in politics, juvenile justice and election security. The most watched videos this year were Candidate Forums: the Ann Arbor Board of Education and the 22nd Circuit Court. We have 384 subscribers and have posted 142 videos since we joined in 2016. <https://bit.ly/2PSyp7r>

League website: Our home page serves as a guide to our programs, events and policies, serving as an overview of the League to visitors and as a valuable resource for members.

Over the last 12 months, we had 19K active users, an increase of 518% over last year, a non-election year. The marked increase reflects the League's ability to provide reliable information during the election. The most viewed pages during the past 12 months: LWV-WC's opposition to Ann Arbor ballot proposals C and D (9K); voting information (3.7K); and local voter guides (3.4K).

www.lvwwashtenaw.org

Our Newsletter, The Voter, keeps members up to date on League positions, events, current legislation, studies, committee initiatives and much more. It invites members to submit articles and is published every other month, with an occasional "in-between" issue. You can find it under "News and Articles" on our website <https://my.lwv.org/michigan/washtenaw-county/articles>

Graphics and Design Standards To reinforce the identity of the League and our active advocacy committees, we are developing graphic images for each group, using consistent design standards. After approval we will create templates help members use the appropriate designs.

Email messages to members and friends. We use Constant Contact to send notices of presentations, our newsletter, studies and surveys, and more. We send announcements to 233 members, but the list increases to 983 contacts when we add friends and other Michigan LWVs.

Our open rate of 65% over the last 12 months is significantly higher than the industry standard of 39%; we also enjoy a click-through rate of 8% vs the industry standard of 2%.

In the past year we had 58,152 sends, consisting of 128 items.

We invite you to follow our social media channels. Your "likes" and "shares" broaden the reach of our messages, raising our position in search engine rankings.

-Betsy Nisbet, Communications Director

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Our policy – The LWV Washtenaw County is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

This past year we continued our outreach and inclusion with all communities in Washtenaw County. We became more embedded throughout the county with our clerk engagement work, special event participation, candidate forums, and our youth outreach through our Student Leaders of Voter Services subcommittee.

DEI partnerships with NAACP Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti

Our partnership with the NAACP included participation in the Juneteenth event at Wheeler Park and Ypsilanti, along with sponsorship of the NAACP freedom fund dinner. Additionally, a member of the LWV-WC attends the NAACP Ann Arbor board meetings monthly to exchange information and stay informed on issues that arise relating to the African American community. Our president, Lynne Kochmanski, serves on the executive board for the Ann Arbor chapter.

DEI Outreach to Parkridge Community Center Ypsilanti

The Parkridge Community Center (PCC) is housed in a one floor building located at 591 Armstrong Street, Ypsilanti. The Center has rooms for meetings, a gym, a kitchen and offices. The Community Center stretches back 75 years. On its website (hosted by Washtenaw Community College) PCC is described as a site offering recreational and educational programs to Ypsilanti youth with a focus on after school and summer activities.

In addition, a wide variety of community organizations offer programs at PCC including for adults. Special one-time events also take place at PCC.

Residents have described PCC as the “heart and soul of Ypsilanti” – especially for the African American community and those residing on the south side.

The PCC weekly Monday morning meetings are opportunities for organizations and institutions serving the residents of Ypsilanti to share information about upcoming programs and exchange contacts. The meetings are a “rich communication hub,” and a bulletin board helping people find the services, resources and connections needed for residents in Ypsilanti.

The meetings are hybrid, and anyone can attend. For information, contact D’ette Walton – dlwalton@ccnet.edu).

DEI partnership with Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (ICPJ)

For the 2024 election season, the LWV Washtenaw County was invited to participate in ICPJ’s Voting Caucus 2024, where 10 community organizations participate. As a member of the caucus, the League can learn where voter information is needed and provide education and registration opportunities where appropriate. We are also able to share information about candidate forums. There are three members, Anne Jackson, Rebecca Shiemke, and Lynne Kochmanski, who attend regularly on behalf of the LWV-WC. The meetings took place on Zoom every 2 weeks throughout the year.

-Lynne Kochmanski, President

-Sandra Sorini Elser, Advocacy Director

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

A major focus of the Membership Committee this year was the transition to the new, national Chapter Spot membership management system. This initiative transfers the processing of new and renewing members to LWVUS. With the implementation of the new data management system, members can now update and maintain their own profiles on the LWVUS site, change payment methods, and choose auto-renewal of their membership. Along with many other members of leadership, the membership chair and roster manager attended multiple training sessions in preparation for the changeover. While the process was not without challenges, the transition is moving ahead. Since most current memberships in our chapter will expire at the end of 2025, many members will begin receiving notice from the new system in the late summer or fall.

The Membership committee offered 7 orientation sessions in the past year, with 36 new members attending. We continued to use Zoom as it allowed for greater participation from new members, although we will introduce some in-person sessions later in 2025. Orientations provide an opportunity to educate new members about the goals and purposes of the League and opportunities for volunteer service. We also collect information about their interests, skills and abilities, and then connect our new members with the appropriate committee or project. Orientations are conducted by Vice-President Catherine Murau and Membership Chair Mary Ann McGee.

One new initiative started in the fall was the President’s Coffee. Approximately once a month President Lynne Kochmanski made herself available for an informal coffee hour at various locations around Washtenaw County. These coffees were informal, small opportunities for the president to meet members, answer questions and hear their concerns. Six coffees were held between September 2024 and April 2025, and over 20 members attended.

Given the current challenging environment for voters’ rights, it is not surprising that we have seen an increase in member enrollment for 2025. We hope to build on this trend as we continue to grow our membership in both number and diversity.

	May 2023	May 2024	May 2025
Primary Members	228	211	289
Additional Members	37	29	***
Life Members	7	3	6
Student Members	6	9	***
Totals	278	252	295

****The LWVUS has collapsed these categories in the general membership category.

-Mary Ann McGee, Membership Chair

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Our programs continue to be coordinated through our Advocacy, Voter Services and Membership committees, and through our Presentation Coordinator.

LWV-WC filled the Program Director position in 2024 and reevaluated our local program. A survey was conducted to get feedback on how membership would like events to be delivered and the types of programs they would find most valuable. The top-rated topics were:

- Voting Rights
- Voter Education and Outreach (including Youth Voter Engagement)
- Money in Politics
- Environment and Climate
- Healthcare Reform

There was significant interest in forums related to our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) mission of fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access and belonging for all people. There were themes that were mentioned multiple times:

- Developing partnerships with groups representing underserved communities
- Diversifying our membership base
- Addressing LGBTQ+ issues

70% of our members prefer a combination of in-person and virtual events.

Since the current national administration has taken office, we have also heard from members that they would like to understand implications of how people's lives are impacted locally by government based on decisions at the national level.

Our Advocacy committee continued to deliver educational programming related to juvenile justice and justice for all, environmental protection/climate, voting rights, money in politics, healthcare, and firearms safety. These programs are further described in the advocacy committee section of this report.

-Lauren Hornberger, Program Director

VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Voter Services Committee strives to empower Washtenaw County voters by:

- Creating and disseminating voter information related to elections, organizing Candidate Forums, adding candidate information to VOTE411.org and disseminating Voter Guides
- Assisting with voter registration including at area High Schools
- Hosting information booths at community events such as Art Fair, festivals and colleges
- Observing public accuracy test of voting machines in each municipality with election clerks prior to elections

In 2024, the team was focused on the August primary and the November general election and ensuring that Washtenaw County voters were informed and ready to vote. Between our annual voter registration drives at area high schools, Washtenaw Community College, during National Voter Registration Week, Art Fair and at various tabling events, over 270 League volunteers provided nearly 500 volunteer hours to register close to 900 individuals and provided important and accurate voting information to many more. Our Candidate Forum team sponsored or co-sponsored 16 forums for the August Primary and 14 for the November elections. Our team recently updated the popular “Your Elected Officials and how to contact them” (YEO), which includes city and township officials as well as state and federal and is divided into two versions – east and west county communities. We also developed many new educational materials including handouts explaining the proposed Federal SAVE Act and the Michigan House Resolution B, which would change the process to register to vote.

As we begin 2025, a non-election year, we hope to turn our efforts toward energizing voters, especially young voters and voters-to-be, with a focus on offering lessons and interactive activities to illustrate the power of voting.

The work of Voter Services is a team effort, and my thanks goes to all our dedicated volunteers, including our hardworking subcommittee chairs and all the individuals who volunteer regularly to staff our information tables and voter registration drives. Their work ensures that every event, program and outreach is successful at engaging and educating voters.

-Rebecca Shiemke, Voter Services Director

Special Events

The Special Events Team was invited to host voter information/registration tables or presentations at approximately **60** different events over the past 12 months. In addition, we provided educational sessions on voting rights to local agencies, including Jewish Family Services, Fresh Start, EMU Votes, Circles of Washtenaw County and the staff of Zingerman's Roadhouse. In addition to registering eligible voters and providing voter educational sessions, we shared information about important election dates, registration, early voting, absentee ballots, VOTE411 bookmarks and voter rights booklets.

LWV-WC continued its collaboration with the grass roots organization "Ypsi, Can I Share (YCIS) by distributing the co-produced YCIS Voter Empowerment Cards for the 4 municipalities in the Greater Ypsilanti area. These cards were shared with other interested local groups and were distributed at events held in the greater Ypsilanti area municipalities that LWV-WC members attended: the Parkridge Summer Festival, and National Voter Registration Day events held in 2 different branches of the Ypsilanti Area District Library.

In addition, LWV-WC was invited by the grassroots group, *Survivors Speak*, to table at 6 different events in the 48918/48917 zip code areas leading up to the August Primary and General Election. Volunteers at the lively community events shared information about Early Voting Sites, YCIS Voter Empowerment cards, voting information and voter registration.

-Trudy Hughes, Rebecca Shiemke, Special Events Co-chairs

Your Elected Officials (YEO)

The "Your Elected Officials" (YEO) Brochure continues to be a popular handout again this year. Professional production of this tri-fold literature piece continues with our partners at Allegra printing. Once again, we've divided the county into East and West and published the lists as separate brochures. The updates resulting from the November elections are complete across the 28 jurisdictions in the county and ready for printing. This latest version will continue to be available as a pdf on the local League website.

-Jeff Bieszki, YEO subcommittee co-chair

SAMPLE OF TABLING EVENTS

Date	Event	Event Partner	League Volunteer Hours	Volunteer Hours	Visitors	Voter Registrations
6/7/24	Ypsi Pride		6	16	42	5
7/18-7/20/24	Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair		31	62	313	5
8/12/24	Summer Food Program	Food Gatherers	2	4	7	
8/26/24	Summer Works Civic Engagement	Washtenaw County	3	5	90	12
9/17/24	Natl Voter Registration Day	YDL	7	12	47	1
9/16-10/18/24	Univ of MI Voting Rights Project	Univ of MI Law School	21	23	700+	38
9/21/24	Delonis Center	Washtenaw Co Shelter Assn	3	6	10	6
9/26/24	MI Climate Summit	MI Climate Action Network	8	15	184	1
3/13/25	Know Your Rights	Penny Stamps School of Art + Design	4	8	35	
3/15/25	Black Family Wellness Expo	Ann Arbor Chapter of the Links	4	8	45	

WCC Voter Registration

LWV-WC held voter registration drives at Washtenaw Community College this year. On September 4, 2024, we participated in fall Welcome Day activities on campus and had a registration table in the Student Center for three additional days. Over the course of four days,

16 volunteers contributed a combined total of 36 volunteer hours. Our volunteers spoke to students about the importance and process of voting and about the work of the League. Our hard-working volunteers engaged with over 230 students who particularly enjoyed our "spin the wheel" trivia game. Students answered questions in categories such as voting rights, voting history and government to win candy prizes. Our volunteers were back at WCC on February 4, 2025, for a one-day winter Welcome Day where we engaged with 41 students.

The WCC event was part of National Voter Registration Day, which occurred on September 17, 2024, but for the League spanned several weeks in September. Volunteers held voter registration drives at two branches of the Ypsilanti District Library where seven volunteers provided 12 volunteer hours. In addition, 2 volunteers provided 5 volunteer hours at a Civic Duty Education Night sponsored by Survivors Speak. Overall, our volunteers spoke to approximately 70 people and provided information on upcoming elections, early voting and Vote411.

-Marge Swan, WCC Voter Registration Subcommittee

Candidate Forums

With broad participation by League members, LWV-WC successfully hosted candidate forums for a March Recall, the August primary and November general elections. League volunteers served as Moderators and Timers from the Voter Services Forum Team; and as Zoom Techs, Zoom Hosts, and Editors from the Communications Team. Numerous League members researched and submitted questions for candidates. Videographers Jesse Miller and Craig Harvey provided videotaping for our in-person events, and we thank them for providing us their high-quality services at a reduced rate.

Most of the forums were conducted via Zoom, recorded, and then made available through our YouTube channel, the Community Television Network (CTN), the District Libraries of Ann Arbor, Saline and Ypsilanti, and on various channels in conjunction with our co-sponsors:

- Washtenaw Bar Association and Dispute Resolution Center
- Unitarian Universalist Church Ann Arbor - Restorative Justice and Civs groups
- LWV Livingston County and Jackson Area Chapters
- Ypsilanti District Library and Ypsilanti Senior Center
- Saline District Library

Between the Recall, Primary and General Election forums, more than 80 candidates participated.

Most-viewed forums:

- Sheriff Primary - in-person and livestreamed event
- Ypsilanti City Council + School Board - in-person and livestreamed event
- Scio Township Supervisor + Clerk
- Washtenaw County Clerk
- Ann Arbor School Board
- Circuit Court Judge, 22nd District
- District Court, District 14A
- Washtenaw Community College Trustees

Thank you to **Molly Maher** for creating and maintaining the intricate spreadsheet that served as the guide for all League forum volunteers.

An extra effort was made again in 2024 to reach communities outside Ann Arbor, to which end we hosted seven forums for township offices in addition to hosting Saline City Council forums as we did in 2023.

Finally, a very special thank you to **Maria Abrahamsen**, who moved out of state in the midst of Primary forums. She found a way to manage an interstate move and continue her leadership for both the Primary and General Election forums.

-Maria Abrahamsen and Catherine Murau, Co-Chairs of Candidate Forums Sub-committee

Vote411

The Vote411 subcommittee had a busy 2024 with the August primary and the November general election. This was a very exciting year for elections, with hotly contested seats at the national, state, and local levels including President. The Washtenaw County team invited and monitored Vote411 responses for 256 candidates for the primary election and an additional 90 candidates for the general election. Candidate races as well as county-wide, local municipality, school district, and library district proposals (22 in the August election, 12 in the general election) were published online at vote411.org. Links to candidate forum videos were provided for applicable races. We continued to promote Vote411 in local online publications, along with AAATA bus cards.

The chart* below shows statistics of public use of Vote411 comparing 2020 and 2024, which are similar in scope.

Name of community	2020 users	2024 users	% inc or % dec
Ann Arbor	63078	12094	81%
Ann Arbor Township	239	390	70%
Chelsea	707	780	10%
Dexter	1508	1170	22%
Manchester	235	293	63%
Milan	120	195	63%
Pittsfield Township	6040	NA	NA
Saline	780	975	25%
Superior Township	NA	585	NA
Willis	235	390	66%
York Township	1020	488	52%
Ypsilanti	1054	1170	11%
Ypsilanti Township	7027	1951	72%
TOTAL	82043	20481	75%

Overall, **20,481** people in Washtenaw County used Vote411 online in 2024. There were 335,763 registered voters in the county for the general election. If we assume that people accessing Vote411 were registered voters, then **6.1%** of registered voters used the site in our county; more than the national numbers of 9.1M Vote411 users, or 3.7% of the ~245M registered voters reported by LWV-US.

Online usage numbers continue to increase for Ypsilanti, Chelsea, Milan, Manchester, Ann Arbor Township, Saline, and Willis. However, countywide usage dropped 75%, from 82,043 users in 2020 to 20,481 users in 2024, a larger decrease than the statewide decrease from 613,501 to 340,980 users.

*Vote411 user data was based on Google Analytics platform GA4 - new in July 2023 - and provided by LWVUS. User location is based on internet service provider IP addresses, so the *specific geographical locations reported do not accurately reflect the locations of the users*. Presumably, users in the other townships not listed for 2024 are lumped into other locations in the data. Countywide, however, the numbers should be approximately accurate.

-Anne Jackson, Vote411 subcommittee chair

Voter Guides

For the 2024 general election, we distributed printed state voter guides and local guides tailored to the 8 school districts in the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. Overall, we distributed 10,000 state guides and 6,450 local guides throughout the County. A sample of the agencies that received state and local voter guides include: all area libraries, all area clerk's offices, senior centers, retirement communities, and a variety of non-profits such as Food Gatherers, Avalon Housing, Corner Health, Hope Clinic, SOS Community Services and Peace Neighborhood Center.

We could not have achieved such wide coverage without the dedicated assistance of LWV-WC volunteers, including Catherine Murau who volunteered her garage to store and sort the guides, and the over 30 volunteers who picked up multiple boxes of guides and personally delivered them to assigned locations throughout the County.

Vote411 yard signs were also given out to volunteers when they picked up printed voter guides to distribute.

-Sue Smereck, Rebecca Shiemke, Voter Guides subcommittee co-chairs

Clerk Engagement

The goal of our clerk engagement work has been to maintain a positive connection with all Washtenaw County election clerks. In 2024 we accomplished this in several ways. First, LWV-WC members volunteered to attend Public Accuracy Tests (PATs) in the jurisdictions where elections were scheduled. In Washtenaw County, 27 of the 28 jurisdictions hold elections (the

voters of the municipality of Barton Hills vote in Ann Arbor Township). Clerks are required to run the PATs before elections to ensure accuracy of the tabulating machines and ballots and the public is invited to observe.

Public Accuracy Tests Attended

Election	Jurisdictions in Washtenaw County visited	League Volunteer observers	Volunteer Hours
August 2024 (State Primary Election)	22	12	68
November 2024 (General Election)	21	17	80
May 2025 (Special Elections)	4	TBD	TBD



In addition, we continued our commitment to recognize our hardworking clerks by providing dessert for their in-person meeting in December. We delivered specially designed thank you cookies for our 28 clerks and officials. During Public Employee Recognition Week in May, we sent a thank-you email to all county clerks acknowledging their commitment to democracy. Finally, we provided nonpartisan educational resources to be displayed in clerk offices, educating voters about candidates and proposals.

-Henriette Remmer, Clerk Engagement subcommittee chair

PRESENTATION COORDINATOR

The Presentation Coordinator position was created in May, 2023, with me as the lead. At the time, I wrote that “The LWV’s mission is to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.” LWV-WC has done that collectively and over time, but we have lacked a way to coordinate topics, speakers, and audiences to maximize our impact. The Presentation Coordinator attends Board meetings but does not vote.

I first assembled a team to help with this new responsibility: Julie Caroff, Joan Sampieri, Sue Smereck, and Donna Snyder. We had two presentations ready to go, Powerpoints with text: New Voting Rights in Michigan, and the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. In 2024, we presented 45 talks to about 1400 people. Until November 2024 we focussed on New Voting Rights in Michigan, but we always offered both and encouraged venues to have us do both, in separate events.

All team members were encouraged to find locations, and Margaret used the LWVWC Newsletter to ask members to suggest locations. Senior living facilities are always looking for such programs, as are churches and groups such as Rotary, Kiwanis, the NAACP and AADL

Initially, we offered online as well as in-person, but by 2024 most venues preferred in-person. Margaret also gave enhanced versions of each talk to Elderwise, which gives 2 hour programs, either in-person or online.

Margaret kept a spreadsheet of each location: the topic, the organization’s name and location, the contact person’s name and contact information, the presenter, the audience’s number, the complete date, the number in attendance. When appropriate (given the audience) we asked Trudy and Jeff’s team to be present to provide LWV information and help with voter registration, but only when we had good reason to believe they would be needed. The best example is the recently opened All Seasons Ann Arbor.

Some unusual requests came from Moms Demand Action, Girls Group, the Ladies Literary Group of Ypsilanti, NARFE (National Association of Retired Federal Employees), a class in the U of M School of Social Work, and University Commons, which has over 600 residences but only 5 people showed up, even though two residents put flyers in every door.

Suggestions for the coming year include:

–Create a presentation on ranked choice voting, with specific reference to Michigan’s current law that does not allow it; to what other Michigan cities have passed; and to the various methods of doing ranked choice voting. Details matter.

–Work with Voter Services, Advocacy, and Board members to identify new presentation topics.

–Find a way to encourage more members to find sites for our presentations: churches, neighborhood organizations, libraries, etc., with special attention to finding audiences that may benefit from knowing more about why every vote matters.

–Ask our members who work with the legislature on pending legislation if they know of topics where better informing the general public might help their efforts, but only for those approved by LWVMI and/or LWVUS.

I’m forever grateful for support from the LWV-WC Board, and especially Lynne and Catherine; and to the members of the Presentation team, who have all agreed to continue in 2025-26.

-Margaret Leary, Presentation Coordinator

STUDENT LEADERS OF VOTER SERVICES

The Student Leaders of Voter Services committee has been actively expanding our impact on youth voter engagement. This past year, our members organized an impactful postcard-writing party, aiming to engage newly registered voters aged 18-21 in Washtenaw County. This event was extremely successful, with volunteers collaborating to complete an impressive 160 postcards! We mobilized nearly 20 general Voter Services volunteers who aided in writing and



mailing over 500 postcards to newly registered voters in Washtenaw County. These personalized messages were a powerful tool to

remind young voters of their crucial role in shaping the future through active election participation.

In September and October 2024, we visited Huron, Lincoln, and Dexter High Schools, successfully registering around 240 new voters ahead of the 2024 General Election. Additionally, we broadened our services to include pre-registration for students 16 and older. We've noticed that by incorporating pre-registration into our services, we are encouraging students to think about voting and elections before reaching voting age, and we hope to see higher youth voter turnout when these students become eligible to vote.

Beginning in the new year, we have focused on recruitment efforts, utilizing student-created flyers and welcoming three new members to support our upcoming Spring High School Registration Drives. We plan to continue recruitment in the coming months and intend to utilize the League of Women Voters Washtenaw County's Instagram page to reach potential new members. Currently, we have 12 Spring Registration Drives scheduled, and we are training new volunteers of all ages to register young voters across Washtenaw County, further strengthening our commitment to youth civic engagement. Our registration training sessions serve to refresh experienced volunteers and prepare new volunteers, ensuring that voter registration is a simple and enjoyable process that encourages participation in future elections. We continue to meet monthly through virtual meetings to plan more youth-centered events focused on civic engagement.

— **Bavani Vijay & Juliana Ramirez, Student Leaders of Voter Services Co-Directors**

Thank you to our 122 amazing volunteers!

Maria	Abrahamsen	Candidate forums, Voter Services notetaker
Ellen	Abramson	Voter Services special events
Kristin	Adair	Federal judiciary study committee
Sally	Allen	Voter guide distribution
Margot	Amrine	Voter guide distribution
Edith	Andersen-Watt	Public Accuracy Test observer
Everett	Armstrong	Public Accuracy Test observer
Rosemary	Augusten	Roster manager, Annual Meeting planning committee
Grace	Bartley	Voter registration, Forest Hills coop election
Ed	Becker	Voter Services special events
Zoe	Behnke	Federal judiciary study co-chair
Jeff	Bieszki	Candidate forums, Voter Services materials housing and creation, Your Elected Officials (YEO) publication, Voter Services special events
Holly	Blais	Observer Corps
Mary	Brennan	Voter Services, voter registration
Rena	Brodkin	Voter Services, voter registration
Nancy	Brucken	Candidate forums, zoom tech; tech support, Vote411
Julia	Caroff	Federal judiciary study committee, Vote411

Cathy	Cieglo	Voter guide distribution
Jill	Cohen	Voter Services special events
Margaret	Conger	Vote411
Susan	Cutler	Voter Services special events
Venus	Dastidar	Student Voter Services
Jeanine	DeLay	Federal judiciary study committee, membership committee
Cheryl	Depner	Observer Corps, C3 group
Michael	Dineen	Student Voter Services
Dee	Dishon	Newsletter, new member letters
Patricia	Drabant	annual meeting planning
Janet	Driver	PAT Observer, voter guide distribution
Robbi	Duda	Advocacy Money in Politics Interest Group; formerly LWVMI MIP Network
Ainsley	Elder	Google Drive project
Joy Wolf	Ensor	Voter guide distribution
Jennifer	Fairfield	Federal Judiciary Study
Julie	Falbaum	Voter Services Low Voter Turnout Subcommittee
Melissa	Famula	LWVUS national convention delegate
Anne	Farmer	Voter guide distribution
John	Farmer	Voter guide distribution
Sara	Fink	Co-chair Advocacy Committee; Healthcare Advocacy Interest Group,

		Public Accuracy Test observer
Cathy	Fitzgerald	Voter registration, Forest Hills Cooperative election worker
Arnold	Fleischmann	Voter Services special events, advocacy study
Karen	Fox	Voter Services special events
Sue	Fraser	Federal judiciary study committee, voter registration
Anne	Gere	Voter Services voter registration
Robin	Gleason	Voter registration
Carolyn	Green	Advocacy Committee - environmental and health care
Jan	Hack	Voter guide distribution
Myrna	Hadwick	Constant Contact email data base monitor
Mary Ellen	Hagenauer	Newsletter editor, candidate forums, zoom tech
Kate	Higgins	Voter guide distribution
Sylvia	Hobart	Voter Services special events
Barbara	Hooberman	Voter Services special events
Christine	Howe	Public Accuracy Test observer
Trudy	Hughes	Candidate forums, Voter Services materials housing and creation, Your Elected Officials (YEO) publication, Voter Services special events
Anne	Jackson	Vote411 coordinator, voter registration, community outreach, candidate forums, Public Accuracy Test observer, Forest Hills coop election
Alan	Jackson	Vote411
AC	Jayne	Advocacy Juvenile Justice

Linda	Jeffries	Voter Services special events
Nishka	Kalantry	Student Voter Services
Barbara	Kay	Voter Services voter registration
Joan	Kellenberg	Voter Services special events
Martha	Kershaw	Public Accuracy Test observer
Laura	Khailany	Voter Services Special Events
Kathleen	Koorhan	Membership committee
Glenn	Kime	Google Drive project
Chris	Kochmanski	Voter Services special events
Zoe	Koosis	Voter Services special events
Elaine	Kopka	Voter Services special events
Lois	Kramer	Voter Services special events
Raina	Kuptz	Graphics; design standards
Gabby	Lamb	Social media strategies
Roger	Lane	Public Accuracy Test observer
Margaret	Leary	By-laws committee, Presentations Coordinator and speaker
Arika	Lycan	Twitter/X and Instagram content management, Voter Services, Special Events, Low Voter Turnout Subcommittee, candidate forums
Carolyn	Madden	Advocacy Committee - criminal justice interest group, Advocacy state committee, candidate forums, Federal judiciary study committee
Molly	Maher	Candidate forums; art for social media

Dirk	Mayhew	Public Accuracy Test observer, Voter guide distribution
Melanie	McIntosh	Federal judiciary study committee, voter guide distribution
Aprille	McKay	Federal judiciary study committee
Jean	McPhail	Voter Services special events
Zara	Mian	Student voter services
Susan	Morse	Voter guide distribution
Cathy	Muha	Voter Services special events
Shannon	Mullarkey	Public Accuracy Test observer,
Martin	Murau	Vote411 voter guide distribution, annual meeting planning
Laura	Noble	Voter Services special events
Lissa	Oliver	Candidate forums, Federal judiciary study committee, Voter Services special events
Jim	Owens	Public Accuracy Test observer
Annemarie	Palincsar	Voter Services special events
Vicki	Paulissen	Firearm Safety-co-chair Statewide Network, candidate forums, advocacy committee; Environmental Interest Group; LWVMI Environmental Network
Patricia	Pooley	Voter Services
Mimi	Quinzy	Voter registration
Mischa	Rafferty	Student voter registration, outreach
Juliana	Ramirez	Student Leaders of Voter Services Co-Leader
Kathy	Reilly	voter registration, postcard campaign, C3 group

Henriette	Remmer	Voter services-clerk engagement, candidate forums, public accuracy tests, board of canvassers observer
Marian	Roberge	voter services, voter registration, Public Accuracy Test Observer, Girls Group presentation leader
Joan	Sampieri	Federal judiciary study committee + consensus meeting moderator, budget committee
Shelley	Schanfield	candidate forums, zoom tech; tech manager; social media; Google Drive project
Sherri	Scharf	Voter Services Special Events
Nancy	Schewe	voter registration, Public Accuracy Test Observer, voter guide distribution
Marjorie	Schuett	Voter Services Co-Chair, Observer Corps observation of election canvas, Voter Services Special Events, Public Accuracy Test Observer, Forest Hills Coop election
Mary	Seelhorst	Publicity, traditional media
Miriam	Shaw	Candidate forums
Jenny	Shubow	Voter guide distribution
Geoffrey	Smereck	Candidate forums, voter guide distribution, Voter Services
Sue	Smereck	Candidate Forums, Federal judiciary study committee, Advocacy Committee, voting rights Advocacy Interest Group chair, voter guide distribution, Voter Services
Donna	Snyder	Nominating Committee, candidate forums, Federal judiciary study committee
Ava	Srivastava	Student Voter Services
Ava	Srivastava	Student Leaders of Voter Services

Barbara	Steer	Voter registration
Deb	Stern	Voter Services Special Events
Marge	Swan	Voter Services, WCC voter registration, Art Fair
Nancy	Swierz	Voter guide distribution
Mary	Tornquist	Public Accuracy Test observer,
Alison	Ulicny	Web manager; candidate forums, zoom tech
Suzanne	Van Appledorn	Voter guide distribution
Anne	Venner	Vote411
Cynthai	Vincent	Voter Services
Kathy	Whitaker	Voter registration
Linda	Williams	YouTube manager, video editor, candidate forums, zoom tech
Elizabeth	Williams	Public Accuracy Test observer
Kim	Winokur	Voter guide distribution
Susan	Wooley	Candidate forums, webmaster, email distribution, Google Drive Project

Appendix 1

LWV WASHTENAW COUNTY PRESIDENTS 1920-PRESENT

(Formerly known as LWV of the Ann Arbor Area)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>
1920-28	unknown
1929	Miss Jennie Buell
1930-31	Mrs. Thomas Reed
1932-33	unknown
1934	Mrs. Harold Smith (Lillian)
1935-36	Mrs. William Forsythe
1937	Mrs. Neil Staebler (Burnette) Mrs. William Stellwagon
1938-39	Mrs. Edward Bryant (Helen)
1940-41	Mrs. Francis Ross (Faith)
1942-43	Mrs. John Chemrada (Eunice "Una")
1944	Mrs. P.S. Lovejoy (Ruth)
1945-46	Mrs. Samuel Dana (Ruth)
1947-48	Mrs. Lawrence Preuss (Pauline)
1949-50	Mrs. William Preston (Sally)
1951-52	Mrs. Ivan Duff (Betty Ann)
1953-55	Mrs. Clyde Coombs (Lolangene)
1955-57	Mrs. Willette Spooner (Vera)

1957-60	Mrs. Algo Henderson (Ann)
1960-63	Mrs. Franklin Moore (Laura)
1963-65	Mrs. Warren Smith (Ann Fowler)
1965-67	Mrs. Elton McNeil (Marjorie)
1967-69	Mrs. Alan Polasky (Mary)
	Mrs. Carl Stadel (Mary remarried)
1969-71	Mrs. Charles Joiner (Ann)
1971-73	Mrs. Cynthia Cross
1973-75	Mrs. Naomi Gottlieb
1975-77	Mrs. George West (Helen)
1977-79	Myrtle Cox
1979-81	Ann Sichel
1981-83	Mrs. George West (Helen)
1983-85	Marianna Kopacz
1985-87	Henry Alting
	Clare Beck
1987-89	Susan Greenberg
1989-91	Zoe Behnke
1991-93	Karwyn Rigan
	Virginia VandenBroek
1993-96	Sally Allen
	Anne Heybey
1996-97	Kirsten Ericksen
	June Rusten

1997-99	unknown
1999-2001	Rachel Tiedke
2001-03	Shirley Axon
2003-06	Sue Smith
2006-10	Zoe Behnke
2010-11	Sue Smith
2011-14	Nancy Schewe
2014-15	Nancy Schewe
	Mary Banks
2015-17	Nancy Schewe
2017-18	Nancy Schewe
	Sally Allen
2018-19	Sue Smith
2019-22	Joan Sampieri
2022-2025	Lynne Kochmanski

Appendix 2

FEDERAL JUDICIARY STUDY REPORT

(will add after June 2025 LWVUS Council meeting is finished and a position is agreed upon by the LWVUS board)

