

Serving 60 communities and 27 school districts in Oakland County, Michigan

Welcome New Members!

Meridith Anness
Jared Boot
Katrina Bratten
Carol Derr
Louise Hartung
Donna Kingsbury
Suzanne Kinnen
Carol Lewis
Cynthia Magda
Susan Mihalko
Julie McCowan
Gwen McGuire



Scroll down for a list of upcoming events!

LWVOA Board of Directors 2019-2020

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Tera Moon - Communication
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Kathleen Maisner - Redistricting
Ann Megalizzi - Membership
Kim Somsy - Voter Editor
Eva Packard - They Represent
You

Get to Know the Legislature

The LWVOA Advocacy Committee is a fledgling group supporting direct advocacy around important policy issues. We are currently organizing Legislative Interviews with our local representatives. If you are excited about engaging directly with legislators, this is the perfect mission for you!

In these initial interviews, we'll be getting to know our local legislators to learn more about what they hope to accomplish over the next two years. Training and deployment for these interviews will occur on April 14 at 7 pm via Zoom. Watch your email for more details.

Our intention is to grow an active Legislative Watch team - this is work you may already be doing! If you attend your local city/township/village council meetings, school district board meetings, or legislative committee meetings, and would be willing to send a brief update of important issues being considered, please let us know!

Board of Canvassers Observation / Democracy in Action

In 2020, our League expanded its footprint in serving our communities in pursuit of enhancing Democracy. We worked with Betsy Cushman on a League state program to observe the certification of our Oakland area Board of Canvassers.

This program headed by Betsy Cushman helped us understand the secure election process we enjoy in Michigan. This also helps fulfill one of our League principles. With programs like this we can truly become ambassadors of accurate information. As Americans' most trusted non-partisan political organization we can educate and inform those in our sphere of influence

Communities of Interest / Redistricting

OFF-BOARD POSITIONS
 Ann Edwards - Mailings
 Susan Liebetreu - Vote 411
 Debra Horner - Voter Guides
 Kim Brown/Tera Moon -
 Webmaster
 Kathy Henry - Education
 Karen DeGrendel - Finance

NOMINATING COMMITTEE
 Jenny Alvarez
 Kathy Henry

Our Oakland Area League has joined a State League program to gather data for the Redistricting Commission. We have a local group of five in training to identify groups or communities of interest. This program is to help ensure that the redistricting commission has all the data to create fair and competitive districts.

As this program develops, more information will be reported.

A Message from the CEC Committee Honoring Women's History Month

Every year March is designated as Women's History Month by a Presidential Proclamation. Ever wonder why and how it began?

As we celebrate Women's History month, I doubt that many are aware that this recognition traces its roots back to March 8, 1857. It occurred after women who were working in the factories in New York City protested poor working conditions. It took quite a long time for women to receive some recognition and laws to be made to improve their working conditions, but the events of that day were later recognized on March 8, 1909.



Fast forward to 1980 when a consortium of women's organizations known as the National Women's History Alliance lobbied Congress for a week long recognition. In February that same year, President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th as National Women's History Week. A year later, Congress passed a resolution marking the occasion.

As subsequent presidents continued to proclaim this week-long celebration, things changed in 1987. It was during President Reagan's administration when Congress was once again lobbied by the same alliance and other women mainly from California to expand the week-long recognition into a month-long recognition. As we mark the accomplishments of women who have changed the culture, history, and society of our country, the month is also celebrated in the United Kingdom and Australia.

For Michiganders, this is a perfect time to celebrate the accomplishments of women such as Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, and Belle Brotherton who was the first president of the Michigan League of Women Voters. As we commemorate the lives of these women and all the activists and suffragists, we can't overlook the common thread that binds them together - persistence.

Local League Updates

Voter Guides

The Meet & Greet on February 21, 2021, organized by Carla Barrow-Wiggins and Ann Megalizzi featured LWVOA member Debra Horner, a University of Michigan faculty member.

They Represent Yous (TRYs)

Eva Packard, Belinda Friis, Carla Barrows-Wiggins and Ann Edwards are in the process of updating the TRYs for the following areas: Birmingham, Farmington, Rochester, North Oakland County, Novi, Pontiac Royal Oak and Southfield.

Debra explained the Voter Guide process and asked for help this summer 2021 with prepping guides for the August primary and November elections.

Once complete, the previous versions on www.lwvoa.org will be replaced.

Save the Date for the 2021 Biennial Convention of LWVMI

Defending Democracy is the timely theme to the League of Women Voters of Michigan's 2021 Biennial Convention. The convention will be held virtually this year and will run from 6:30 pm on Friday, May 21 through 5:00 pm on Saturday, May 22. It will include all the features you are used to seeing at an in-person convention: plenaries, workshops, awards, panel discussions and even a silent auction. The 2021 convention will be fully accessible to voting delegates and non-voting members.

All LWVOA members are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Contact Maria Woloson (mywoloson@gmail.com; phone (248)703-6236) for more info. See the LWVMI website for details of convention.

LWVOA Bylaw Revisions to be Voted on at 2021 Annual Meeting

The Board is proposing bylaw revisions to bring our bylaws into agreement with those of LWV-US. Changes were approved at the 2020 National Convention.

The membership will be asked to approve the changes at this year's annual meeting – which might be in questionnaire form as was the one for 2019, or it might be via ZOOM, or perhaps it will be a picnic outside with everyone masked and socially distanced. The board would be pleased to hear your suggestions and preferences. A complete copy of the bylaws is found in your handbook

Changes proposed:

ARTICLE II. Purpose and Policy. Section 3 added: *Diversity, Equity & 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. A [4] is added: Those who are students are defined as individuals enrolled either as full or part time with an accredited institution.

ARTICLE IX. Principles and Programs , Sec. 1 Principles is amended as follows:
~~The principles are concepts of government adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole. They are the authorization for the adoption of national, state and local program. The Principles are concepts of government supported by the League and are the authorization for adoption of national, state and local program. They may be amended by the convention in the same way as program is adopted under Section 2 of this Article.~~

U.S. Electoral College and the Jan.6, 2021 Insurrection

On Feb. 10, 2021, Maria Woloson presented via Zoom a power point program to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) about the U.S. Electoral College. Over 30 women of the AAUW local Birmingham group attended.

This normally boring event, where the US presidential election results are confirmed indirectly by appointed electors, became a headliner on Jan. 6, 2021. At that time, a threatening mob of over 20,000 stormed the US Capitol Building, disrupting the proceedings. Several people were killed and many seriously injured. Congressmen and staff were forced to evacuate the Capitol Chambers. After six terrifying hours, the National Guard halted the violence and stopped the insurrection.

These events furthered LWVUS's position that the Electoral College should be abolished in favor of the nationwide vote directly choosing the president.

LWVMI Lane Duck Session Study Consensus

Fourteen LWVOA members gathered via a Zoom meeting on February 9 to discuss the materials sent to all members by the LWVMI study group and were able to reach consensus on the questions posed by the group. Members may access the questions and study materials at https://lwvmi.org/member/mem_studies.html



The consensus is to agree with statements 1, 2 and 7, to not to agree with statements 3, 5 and 8. No consensus was reached on statements 4 and 6. The group was not surprised to learn that both parties have used the Lane Duck Session to pass legislation.

Commenting on the issues raised in the study, the group agreed we should not eliminate the ability to bypass standard procedures when a true emergency exists. Theoretically a true emergency would garner bipartisan support and therefore the ability to come up with a super-majority to bypass standard procedures. We suggested that procedures can be bypassed only with a super-majority.

A recording of the meeting is available by contacting lwvoami@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

The following events are for all members:

- March 10, 2021, 3:30 pm - International Woman's Day Celebration by Michigan Department of Labor with elected officials, Gov. Whitmer, SOS Benson, AG Dana Nessel, etc. Stream live at youtube.com/MichiganSoSOffice
- March 23, 2021, 7 pm - LWVMI Advocacy Committee meeting
- March/April date TBD - event for \$400 grant received by LWVOA from LWVMI to promote redistricting and communities of interest participation in redrawing state election districts
- March/April Meet & Greet for new members
- May 21-22, 2021, LWVMI State Bi-annual convention
- Summer 2021, Voter Guide preparation

Help Needed

Help is needed with all committees and events including:

Members who are tech savvy or want to become tech savvy this is for you.

LWVOA hopes to increase its community presence with social media, such as Instagram, Twitter, etc. Everyone is welcome to assist in the effort. No experience necessary. Can be done in the safety of your own home. Please contact Maria Woloson via email: mywoloson@gmail.com or cell phone: 248-703-6236.

This is guaranteed to be a ***fun-filled, enlightening experience.***

**Thank you
to our
sponsors**



MEA
Michigan Education Association
Doug Hill
Board Member, Region 7
President, REA
www.mea.org
Rochester Education Association
200 East Silverbell
Lake Orion, MI 48360
Ofc: 248-874-1832 Fax: 248-377-0520
Email: dhill@mea.org

Shelton
BUICK GMC
855 South Rochester Rd.
Rochester Hills, MI 48307
248.651.5500
www.shelton.com

League of Women Voters Oakland Area | league@lwvoa.org
248-594-6602 | www.lwvoa.org

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