



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

VOTER

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Special Edition, 2019

Celebrating 100 years of Woman Suffrage in Michigan

Celebrating 100 Years of the League of Women Voters of Michigan



Michigan League of Women Voters' 39th Convention

By Ann Abdoo

As we sat at the Convention banquet Saturday evening, 185 League members, spouses and friends lit candles and sang happy birthday to the League of Women Voters of Michigan. I thought, this is amazing, a volunteer organization that not just survived, but thrived during this very long time. I could feel the positive energy in the room and felt so proud to be a member of this great organization. Our attendees were Lisa Asquini, Donna Gilkey-Lavin, Carrie Moon-Dupree, Angela Ryan, Megan Chenoweth, Ann Abdoo, Linda Curry, Rosemary Doyle, Ann Marie Graham-Hudak, Maureen Hughes, Deanne Master, Kathy Mchahwar, Colleen Mills, Valerie Nelson, Lena Packer, Sue Wabeke, and Paula Bowman

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2018--2019

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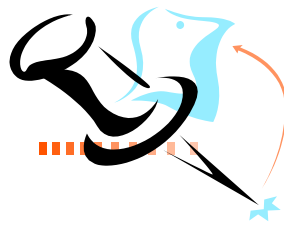
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Membership is open to anyone
Age 16 & older.

Dues: Student \$5; Individual
\$60; Household \$85

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



President's Message

When the May *Voter* was in the planning stages, it was decided that would be the last newsletter issued before this year's Annual Meeting. With the resounding success of the LWVMI Convention here in Livonia, it seemed logical to issue this special newsletter focused on the Convention. So, here I am again, really wrapping up my eight years as League President. I, too, will focus on the Convention, as it was a great way to end my last term.

If you didn't attend the Convention, it's our hope that this issue will give you a full picture of what occurred. For those who did attend, it should bring back reminders of all that was accomplished in less than three days.

One of my favorite parts of any Convention is the Dine-Around event the first night. Once the first Plenary session takes place, we're off and running through a schedule that starts early in the morning and goes late into the evening. There's not much chance to chat with people or get to know those from other Leagues. The Dine-Around, which takes place just before the first Plenary, provided that opportunity for interaction. Over 100 of the 200 delegates participated in the event. Members of our League served as hosts to groups at eight local restaurants, all within three miles of the hotel. From all indications, it was a huge success at all of the restaurants.

I've been attending State and National Conventions for a number of years, so it's always a delight to see members of other Leagues with whom I've worked on committees or other League projects. This Convention was no exception. Among those with whom I reconnected, there were two women I hadn't seen in nearly 10 years, so it was great to see that they are still around and active in their local Leagues.

We will continue to celebrate the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in Michigan and the establishment of the LWV of Michigan this year as we lead into the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment and establishment of LWVUS next year. These are exciting and challenging times, and I look forward to participating with you in all that lies ahead for the League.

Be sure to mark June 22 on your calendar for the League's Annual Meeting. It's a great opportunity to hear about what we accomplished this year, what's planned for next year, elect the new Board, and socialize with fellow League members. I hope to see you there.

Angela Ryan

Thank You!

by Ann Abdoo

On Sunday as people were leaving the hotel, I heard several say that this was the best League convention they had been to. It would not have been possible without the dedication of all our members who were on the Planning Committee, and all who worked during the convention doing whatever needed to be done.

The Planning Committee was chaired by Paula Bowman who did an excellent job working with committee members: Angela Ryan, Carrie Moon-Dupree, Lori Gilbo, Linda Priest, Lisa Asquini, Kathy Mchahwar, Linda Curry, Sue Wabeke, Geri Rinschler from Oakland Area and Tom Wells from Grosse Pointe.

Friday night's Dine Around where we could pick one of eight local restaurants was planned and hosted by Angela Ryan, Carrie Moon-Dupree, Lori Gilbo, Linda Priest, Kathy Mchahwar, Linda Curry, Lisa Asquini and Sue Webeke.

Others registered attendees, sold breakfast tickets, organized and worked at the Silent Auction: Maureen Hughes, Lena Packer, Anne Marie Graham-Hudak, Nancy White, Joan Verla, Colleen Mills, Deanna Master, Susan Rowe, Virginia Belinski, Mary Visos and Pat Tavidian.

Thank you all for your hard work to make the Convention such a success.

Recognition

by Ann Abdoo

Awards were given to thank people for going above and beyond what was expected, and there were those who received awards for their achievements, or were elected to the State Board.

The Belle Ringer Award gives local presidents the opportunity to recognize people who have done outstanding work on the local level. They receive a small gold bell tied with a red ribbon.

Carrie Moon Dupree received her award for giving generously of her time at candidate forums and other voter service activities. Angela wrote that Carrie is the consummate volunteer.

Lena Packer received her award in the area of strategic planning/fundraising. Lena has handled the annual fundraiser auction for a number of years.

She also coordinated our League's participation last year in apartment voter registration events, for which we received grant money from LWVUS and the apartment property owners. Lena frequently suggests ways to increase the League's income.

The Maryann Mahaffey Community Services Award is given to someone who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the community, exemplified League principles, served in community service roles inside and outside the League and demonstrated a commitment to public leadership. This year the award went to our League member, Laura Callow. She has spent forty-seven years working for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Congratulations, Laura!

We will be well represented on the State Board. Paula Bowman was elected to the position of Program Vice-President. She has been on the State Board since 2003. Megan Chenoweth will now be a director. She has been very active in our League with voter services, giving presentations on issues, and maintaining our League's presence on Vote 411. Their terms begin July first.

Workshops

by Angela Ryan

Delegates had the option of attending pre-convention presentations Friday afternoon. The first presenters were Mark Brewer and Jay Yeager, attorneys who represented LWVMI in this year's Redistricting lawsuit. Most compelling to me were the emails that they obtained for the case, which provided a window into the process used to develop the current redistricting map. While the League prevailed in federal court, any redrawing of maps for the 2020 election has been put on hold.

The next presenter was Sharon Dolente from the ACLU. She spoke about Promote the Vote (PMV), the 2018 voting-rights ballot proposal. She addressed the impact of this amendment on future elections in Michigan. Ms. Dolente encouraged us to contact our local clerks, mentioning ways they may need assistance and offering suggestions for how clerks can better serve absentee ballot voters.

The last speaker was Alicia Gurrieri from LWVUS. She addressed HR1, the For the People Act, which addresses voting rights. The bill passed the House on March 8, 2019, but it's awaiting a hearing in the Senate. Ms. Gurrieri informed us that for the first time, Congress is supporting statehood

for the District of Columbia (DC). Citizens who live in DC don't have the same voting rights as the rest of us. She asked us to contact our legislators to gain their support for both of these issues.

On Saturday the Convention offered six workshops: Water Quality/Advocacy, US Census, Voter Service Basics, Engaging Members, ERA Update, and LWV Best Practices. Delegates had the option of going to two of the workshops, and at least one member from our delegation attended each of these workshops.

Presentation by Congresswoman Rashida

Tlaib

by Ann Abdoo

Representative Rashida Tlaib represents Michigan's 18th district. She grew up in Southwest Detroit, the oldest of fourteen siblings. In her district is the 48217 zip code, with twenty distinct ethnic groups.

Long before she was elected to Congress, she was politically active trying to get the corporations to stop their practices of air pollution. In Wayne County 11.2% of children eighteen and younger have asthma. There are high rates of cancer and lead poisoning.

She organized the "We have the Right to Breathe" campaign, and she strongly believes that public health must come first, not corporations. She also advocates for the government to do something about the PFAS problem, and supports universal health care. Her thirteen-year-old son calls her views "peopleism", not socialism.

Auctions

by Angela Ryan

The fund raiser for the State Education Fund was two auctions. The silent auction consisted of donations from individuals, and local Leagues donated themed baskets. Our League's basket was "Voting Rights." It included League memorabilia and books about the suffragists.

At the banquet, there was a live auction offering a 1980 bottle of Champagne and a vacation package to South Haven. Our member Donna Gilkey-Lavin won the vacation package. The auctions raised \$4800.

Panel Discussion with Diane Rockall & Kathleen Straus

by Paula Bowman

As a nod to the celebration of the Michigan LWV's 100th anniversary, the focus of the Sunday morning breakfast hour was LWVMI's history. Diane Rockall, who wrote *The League of Women Voters in Michigan, It's History (1995)* was joined by Kathleen Strauss, a 60+ year member of the LWV Detroit. Diane discussed the early days of the League, including her inability to identify some early leaders by their first names. Through the 1960s, women were often only identified by their husband's names (i.e. Mrs. John Doe). Diane's full *History* can be read on the LWVMI's website.

Kathleen, an education activist was former president of the Michigan's State Board of Education, and member of Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. She talked about how League advocacy on controversial issues made a difference in policies and legislation. She was a LWV leader in advocating for school desegregation and improving public education in Detroit and other districts with large populations of poor people. Kathleen has an incredible memory and rattled off significant event and meeting dates over the past 60 years as if they were yesterday. She kept the audience entranced with her early League stories.

Picture Gallery

The cut-out in color was acquired by our League and will be displayed at future events. The lady in black and white was an actress which conveyed suffragists' ideals before 1920.



Lena Packer & Angela Ryan



Lori Gilbo



Honor Guard
Canton Girl Scout Troop 40900



Laura Callow receiving the Maryann Mahaffey Services Award; on left, Judy Karandjeff, outgoing President Michigan LWV, & Chris Carson, on right, LWVUS President.



Rashida Tlaib, Congresswoman, from Michigan's 18th District.



LWV NWW's donation for the State League's auction to raise money for their Education Fund

Upcoming Events

Sat., June 22
11:30 am – 2pm

Annual Meeting
Claddagh's Irish Pub
17800 Haggerty, Livonia 48152

Sat., Aug. 24
11:30 am – 2:30 pm

Women's Equality Day Luncheon
St. Mary's Cultural & Banquet Center
18100 Merriman Rd., Livonia 48152

To find the most current news about the League, go to the website
www.lwvnorthwestwayne.org
or
<http://facebook.com/LeagueofWomenVotersOfNorthwestWayneCounty>

Dues Reminder

Membership dues are due on July 1, 2019. The easy way to pay is to bring your check to the annual meeting. Please encourage students to join for just \$5. See attached form.

Women's Equality Day Luncheon

See attached flyer for details.