

Voter

January/February 2023

Serving the people of Canton, Garden City, Livonia, Northville City and Township, Plymouth City and Township, Redford Township, Sumpter Township, Belleville, Van Buren Township, Wayne, and Westland, Michigan

League Calendar

February 11, 2023: General membership meeting via Zoom 10:00 a.m. to noon. Guest Speaker Steve Spreitzer.

February 20, 2023: Zoom Book Discussion at 7 p.m.

March 21, 2023: Zoom Board meeting at 7 p.m.

April 15, 2023: General membership meeting, in person, at the Plymouth Library, 10 a.m. to noon. Library is located at 223 S Main St. Plymouth, MI 48170.

May 16, 2023: Board meeting via Zoom at 7 p.m.

May 19-21, 2023: State Convention @ Kellogg Center, Lansing. In person only.

June 10, 2023: Annual meeting, in person. Location TBD.

Check out the [League's Calendar Page](#) for up-to-date information on events.

President's Perspective

By Carrie Moon-Dupree

The dust hasn't settled on 2022 and yet we are knee deep in planning for the new year. First I want to acknowledge that 2022 was a busy, successful year for our League. I am proud of the work our members put in to educate voters on the issues, produce Voter Guides, both print and digital versions (Vote411.org) for the 13 communities we serve. We spoke at libraries and other community forums, held candidate forums and interviews and were part of the redistricting process. We held a successful auction to raise money to further our efforts. The DEI and Observer Corps have been visible and active. We've welcomed new members. We held 6 board meetings and 6 membership meetings, including our Annual meeting at Rocky's in Northville and the holiday party at the home of Lois and Dave Baughman. Thank you to all who made this

possible.

Now on to 2023. This year the State convention will be held at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing on **May 19th - 21st**. This will be an in person convention only. Our League is allowed 7 delegates, the president and 6 others. Please let me know of your interest in attending. More information about the convention will be out next week and I will pass that along. This is always a great way to increase your knowledge, meet like-minded people and get energized for the work we do.

Two exciting general membership meetings are on tap, one via Zoom and one in person.

February 11, 2023 @ 10:00 am via Zoom. The DEI committee will bring us a guest speaker, Steve Spreitzer. Steve is President & CEO of the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion (see separate article). I have heard him speak and he's a very worthwhile speaker.

April 15, 2023 @ 10:00 am at the Plymouth District Library. We will have a panel discussion about what it takes to run for office, the pros and cons and why people choose to serve. The Northwest Wayne County League has many elected officials including school board, township supervisor, State Representative and two judgeships. Several of our elected members will make up the panel.

The nominating committee is hard at the work that will culminate in a slate of candidates to be presented for a vote at our annual meeting, June 10, 2023. Please keep an open mind if you receive a call to run for an office. We cannot do this alone and everyone has something to offer. The nominating committee members are Susan Rowe, Donna Gilkey-Lavin, James Moon-Dupree, Linda Priest and Linda Curry. Don't be shy! If you have interest in becoming a board member, etc., please reach out to one of the members. They would love to hear from you.

The coffee hours are being rescheduled to later in the year. Don't know how it happened, but I am overcommitted right now and just couldn't work them into my schedule.

Finally, it has been my pleasure to serve as your President and work alongside you as we continue to ensure that democracy is alive and well in Michigan. Here's to another year full of challenges, joys, friendships and most importantly voter service.

Speaker: General Membership Meeting February 11, 10:00 a.m.

by
Laura Jannika



Steve Spreitzer will be speaking at our February 11th general meeting via Zoom for the DEI committee. Steve is a Livonia Bentley graduate and is known as a leader in promoting harmony among racial, religious, cultural and economic groups. He guides a human relations organization whose purpose is to overcome racism and discrimination by crossing generational, ethnic, geographic, racial, religious and cultural boundaries. Steve is the president and CEO of the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity & Inclusion Detroit, Michigan and will talk about the importance of Diversity, equity and inclusion in our community.

Membership Update Our Work Continues

By Maureen Hughes

Happy New Year!
Welcome to 2023 and even more challenges to voting rights and democracy. We are fortunate to have such dedicated members who contributed to the successes we achieved in 2022.

This year, the challenges continue. Your past support, either through your hands-on volunteer work or your ongoing monetary support of League projects, strengthens our League. **SUCCESS IS PEOPLE DRIVEN.**

To that end, if you know of anyone who is interested in joining the League, please contact me at 734-620-5715. **Dues remain the same at \$60 for primary members, \$30 for an additional household member and \$5 for students.**

Thanks to all our wonderful members!

Note from the Treasurer

By Susan M. Rowe

The LWV MI sent us two checks. One for \$300 is from the Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy Grant and the second for \$1000 from the Tides Foundation is for all the work done on the proposals, registering voters, observing Board of Canvassers, working at polls, etc.

The LWV MI received a C3 grant from the ProDemocracyUS, a fund of the Tides Foundation, stating to use the funds where the greatest impact could be made to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy. The State LWV believed the greatest impact is made by the local Leagues at the grass roots. It feels good to know that what we do is appreciated and recognized.

Observer Corps

By Lena Packer

Have you ever wondered how your local officials conduct themselves during their meetings? Do they show respect to the audience participants? Are opposing comments allowed to be heard? Are the meetings organized? What are the current issues for the local school board? What does a library board do? How do planning commissions arrive at their decisions for community development?

The purpose of our Observer Corps is to observe the process and substance of our local government councils, boards, and commissions. Our members attend solely as observers and do not participate in these meetings. An observer can attend these meetings in person or watch them on YouTube. We record how well good governance is being followed. Every couple of months, we meet to share our observations and discuss any concerns we may have. Right now, there are a number of school boards, city councils, commissions, and other local boards who do not currently have an observer. If you would like more information about our group or would like to join,

If you are interested in joining the Observer Corps, please contact Lena Packer at 734-634-1728.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

By Laura Jannika

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee is back into brainstorming mode. First, we have created a list of books on the topic and Marjorie Lynn will be presenting ideas for our newly emerging book club. This is a great way to expand and share our thoughts. Stay tuned.

When it comes to DEI, the topic usually involves lists, for good reason. I will start with the word DIVERSITY which means all voices in a spectrum. To help us open our minds I would like to list twenty-nine ways to consider diversity. The list comes from LWVMI- DEI Group:

Gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, indigenous people, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, appearance, language, accent, ability status, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, job role, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance and political perspective.

I hope we can look at these words with our Equity Goggles. What pictures and memories come to mind when we hear these 29 words? Have you ever felt bias? That's a difficult question to answer.

Since most of our biases are unconscious, it takes study to become aware of how our upbringing has conditioned us. Consider this anecdote of bias, and a skillful response, from a good source, *Better Allies* info@betterallies.com : A reporter at a press conference for Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin and then New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, both women, asked if the two leaders were meeting because they are about the same age... Ardern responded: "My first question is I wonder whether or not anyone ever asked [former U.S. President] Barack Obama and [former New Zealand Prime Minister] John Key if they met because they were of similar age." She then highlighted how the country depends on Finnish exports and the economic opportunities for the two countries ahead. Marin added, "We are meeting because we're prime ministers."

This example shows a useful tactic, "Flip it to test it" to see if other identities would be treated the same way.

Here is to going into 2023 with an open heart and finding ways to broaden our LWV spectrum.

DEI Committee Book Club

Our Committee has chosen to begin our Book Club with the book *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. The book is an award-winning collection of essays and stories about how she melds her scientific training in botany with the teachings of her own Citizen Potawatomi Nation as she lives her life with her children, her property, her students, and her history. "When we **braided sweetgrass**, we are braiding the hair of Mother Earth, showing her our loving attention, our care for her beauty and well-being, in gratitude.... For only when we can hear the languages of other beings are we capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learning to give our own gifts in return." It's a lovely book, personable, informative, more story-telling as is the Indigenous way.

We will hold our first meeting by Zoom **February 20 from 7-8:30**. At that time we will discuss how we want the group to function, how often to meet, how much of each book to read, and more. And then we will talk about the book, or at least the first 60 pages of it. We invite you to join us.

In Case You Missed It: The Auction Fun Continues

by Angela Ryan

At last year's fundraising auction, we offered attendees the opportunity to sign up for the Newburg Intersection Tour at Greenmead planned for May 6, 2023. It's a tour of **Greenmead Historical Park** in Livonia that will include the Newburg Church, School, Bungalow, and A.J. Geer General Store. The cost is \$10, and the tour starts at 10 a.m. There will be the option of going to lunch at a nearby restaurant at the end of the tour at your own expense.

Greenmead is Livonia's version of Greenfield Village, and it's a hidden gem of the city. You'll learn a lot of history of the area through this tour. There are still spots available for this event. If you are interested in this tour, please contact Angela Ryan at 734-591-0995.

Once you get confirmation that you've been added to the event list, please send your check, made out to LWV NW Wayne, to League Treasurer Susan Rowe, 35415 Elm St., Wayne, MI, 48184. We hope you'll consider joining in this fun opportunity to learn some local history and support the League.

The Scholarship Committee Update

Toni-Jones & Pat Bindas, co-chairs

Last year the NW Wayne County League offered up to three scholarships to area students. It was the first time since 2010 we had done so. The Board approved naming the scholarships after the late lifetime member Esther Friedrichs and immediate past President Paula Bowman, who had served as local League President for a total of 16 years and approved up to \$3000. We only had three applicants, none of whom we could approve.

Therefore, the committee has thought of several ways to make this activity more successful. Starting early is one. We are looking for new members to help consider our options for future scholarships. Contact Toni Jones at 248-982-4566.

Save the Date! The Auction is Coming Back!

By Angela Ryan

The 2022 League fundraising auction was a big success, so we've already scheduled this year's auction. It will be held on **October 14, 2023**, at the same location – the Alexander Blue House at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia. As in the past, it will start at 11:30 a.m. Further details will be shared as they are developed. In the meantime, start thinking about any new or gently used items you could donate; a party that you could host (card, games, or luncheon); a business where you can ask for a donation; and/or any event you could organize (a tour of a small museum or other venue). Financial donations are gratefully welcome from those who are unable to participate otherwise in

this event. Most importantly, put this date on your calendar now. It's the one fundraiser that pays for the League's activities each year.

We Had a Merry Christmas!

By Lois Baughman



Lois and Dave Baughman were happy to host this year's Holiday Party in December. It was great to see familiar faces (in person!) once again to share in some holiday cheer and conversation. We enjoyed having a full house with about 30 people! Thanks to everyone that brought an appetizer or dessert to share - everything was delicious. Wishing all a happy, healthy, and safe New Year!



Welcome!

Welcome to our newest League members:
Latrice Peterson
Susan Rion

**League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County
Board of Directors**

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VP Development: Angela Ryan

Directors:
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Committee Chairs

Advocacy: Carrie Moon-Dupree
Auction: Angela Ryan
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:
Laura Jannika
Financial Review: Nancy White
Legislative Interviews: Susan
Rowe

Membership: Maureen Hughes
Nominating: Linda Curry
Observer Corps: Lena Packer
Redistricting: Angela Ryan
Scholarship: Toni Jones, Co-chair
Voter Registration: Mary Visos
Voter Service: Val Nelson

**League of Women Voters of
NW Wayne County**
PO Box 51502, Livonia, MI 48151
734-421-4420

Membership in the League is open to anyone age 16 & older. Dues: Student \$5, Individual \$60, Household \$90. Join through our website or call 734-421-4420.

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 influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Visit our website

Email us

Membership Information

League of Women Voters of
Michigan website

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