



***League of Women Voters - Oakland Area, Michigan
January 2024 Newsletter and Events***

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

With renewed energy and enthusiasm, LWVOA has lots in store for 2024. Here are this month's events to participate in via Zoom or in person.



(1) LWVOA's presentation by Oakland County Clerk & LWVOA member, Lisa Brown: Thursday, 1/18/24 at 1p at Bloomfield Township Public Library (BTPL)

"Clerks Under Attack"

In today's perversely contentious political world, many elected officials are finding themselves the target of threats to their lives. Clerk offices throughout Michigan have experienced adversity never seen before.

Oakland County Clerk, **Lisa Brown**, will present information on recent events and issues including voting procedure security as well as the personal safety of employees. Instances include clerk offices that received mail threats, notably in November of 2023 where election offices in at least five states received letters – some containing the highly toxic chemical fentanyl.

As a previous member of the Michigan State House of Representatives, Ms. Brown has a lengthy background in government and first-hand experience with the implementation of voting processes. Her presentation is certain to be enlightening and informative.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Contact Geri Rinschler at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.

(2) LWVOA 2024 Program Planning & Policy Review: Saturday, 1/27/24 at 10a-noon at Judy Bateman's home
Address: 10494 Talbot, Huntington Woods, MI 48070

Judy has again graciously offered to host this meeting that includes a fabulous BUFFET of amazing foods and beverages. ALL MEMBERS are encouraged to attend to meet other members and learn about LWV positions/policies locally, statewide, and nationally.



Please bring a dish to share and add to the banquet.
Contact Judy Bateman at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for info.

(3) LWVOA partnering with AAUW Observer Corps to attend local monthly school board meetings, in person or via Zoom

With nationwide frequent disturbances, local school boards have become targets of aggressive minority viewpoint groups. With observation and reporting, it is hoped to stem the tide of extremism at the school level. All LWVOA members are welcome to observe any of the 27 Oakland County local school board meetings. A brief report sheet is available online for filing after meetings are attended.

Contact Maria Woloson at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.

(4) LWVUS "HC4US" or "Healthcare for the United States" focus group: Sunday, 1/7/24 at 8p via Zoom

LWV members from various states provide information on the present state of our healthcare systems. Monthly speakers have included professionals working to facilitate governmental initiatives for an equitable health system for ALL.

The Zoom link for all interested members

is <https://tinyurl.com/HCR4US-Jan7>.

Contact Maria Woloson at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.



(5) LWVMI Statewide Firearm Safety Network Group: Tuesday, January 9th at 7p via Zoom

This group's focus includes Michigan laws that provide background checks, safe storage laws, and extreme risk protection orders (ERPO or red flag laws). Prior presentations by professional gun safety experts are available online.

Contact firearmsafety@lwvwashtenaw.org for more info.

(6) LWVOA Community Engagement Committee (CEC): Wednesday, January 10th at 4p via Zoom

This group plans and implements events and activities that members and the public may participate in. Ideas and connections for future presentations are always welcome.

Contact Geri Rinschler at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.



(7) LWVOA Marketing/Communications Working Group: Wednesday, January 17th at 7p via Zoom

This group facilitates social media to increase awareness and participation in LWVOA activities. See the website below for forms to notify this group of upcoming events to publicize.

Contact Leslie Fleming at MarCom.LWVOA@gmail.com for more info.

(8) LWVUS Abolish the US Electoral College focus group: Friday, January 19th at 1p (Michigan time) via Zoom

This group, directed by LWV-Illinois, has monthly presentations by knowledgeable speakers regarding the history and present-day issues for electing the US President and Vice President. Previous presentations are recorded and available for viewing.

As set forth by LWVUS at its 2022 National Convention, abolishing the Electoral College by US Constitutional Amendment has been elevated to one of the League's top priorities.

Contact Maria Woloson at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.



(9) LWVOA Vote411.org: Help needed

Starting in January 2024, assistance to update and process the LWV internet voter guide and print edition is needed for the 2024 elections.

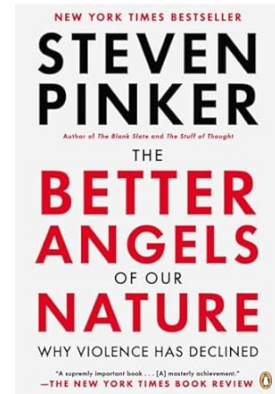
LWVOA member and University of Michigan political science faculty member, Debra Horner, will direct this effort.

Contact Debra Horner at LWVOAMi@gmail.com for more info.

(10) LWVOA Book Club: Tuesday, January 30th at 7p at BTPL

BTPL Director and LWVOA member, Tera Moon, will lead the discussion of this month's book selection, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (2011) by Steven Pinker.

A controversial history of violence argues that today's world is the most peaceful time in human existence, drawing on psychological insights into intrinsic values that are causing people to condemn violence.



SAVE THE DATE for "Keep Our Republic", with speaker Anne Mervenne: Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 1p at BTPL

Founded in 2020, KOR is a bipartisan, nationwide group of past and present elected officials as well as citizens formed to combat the destructive elements perverting our politics.

As a member of KOR's Michigan advisory committee, Ms. Mervenne will provide information regarding this organization's mission and efforts.

Ms. Mervenne's many accomplishments include appointments to bi-partisan policy-making boards by four different Michigan governors, Detroit Public Safety Foundation, Co-Director of the Political Leadership Program, and now serves on the Board of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan while maintaining a consulting firm.

This presentation is certain to be informative and motivating.



In memory of Marguerite Mary Kowaleski

Long-time LWVOA member, Marguerite Mary Kowaleski, 96, passed away on November 6, 2023.

Marguerite had 9 children, 13 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren. Her daughter, Paula Bowman, also a long-time LWV member, is now Co-President of LWVMI.

Marguerite was a life-long advocate for the poor by working for numerous organizations including the Oakland County Welfare Rights Organization (WRO) for 40 years and testifying in front of the Michigan Legislature for fair Medicaid benefits, food subsidies, and health and disability benefits. She also participated in numerous demonstrations and walked on plenty of picket lines. Throughout her years of working with underserved communities, Marguerite received numerous awards, including the Liberty Bell Award from the State Bar of Michigan, the Award of Excellence from the Legal Aid & Defender Association, the Spirit of Detroit Heart of Gold Award, and the Belle Brotherton Award, the highest service award given by the League of Women Voters of Michigan. Despite her many accolades, Marguerite was humble and compassionate, passing along many of her values concerning public service to her children and grandchildren.



Maria Woloson

President, League of Women Voters, Oakland Area, Michigan



League of Women Voters Oakland Area | PO Box 930038, Wixom, MI 48393

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