

Voter

March/April 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

April 11, 2023: 6:00 p.m. Virtual forum "Voting Rights and Democracy", co-sponsored by the Detroit Public Library and the LWV Detroit. <https://dpl-voting-democracy.eventbrite.com> (details below).

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

April 17, 2023: Zoom Book Discussion at **7 p.m.** *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Email James Moon-Dupree for link at jmoon-dupree242071mi@comcast.net

April 24, 2023: National Popular Vote Webinar, **7:00 EST**
Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87303480345?pwd=KzczYVViaS9PTUNrUjdtaHdMSDJqdz09> . This link gets you to the meeting, **but click on the Northwest Wayne County calendar link below for more information.** The link on the flyer below is inactive.

May 6, 2023: Tour of Greenmead Historical Park. Livonia 10:00. Spots available for this event. If you are interested in this tour, please contact Angela Ryan at 734-591-0995.

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

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

June 10, 2023: Annual meeting, in person. Location Rocky's of Northville.

October 14, 2023: Fundraising Auction, Alexander Blue House at Greenmead

Check out the **League's Calendar Page** for up-to-date information on events.

<https://my.lwv.org/michigan/northwest-wayne-county/calendar>

President's Perspective

By Carrie Moon-Dupree



I just chucked my original article. Another school shooting alert just came across my screen and stopped me in my tracks. By the time you read this, the details of what happened in Nashville will be known and we will once again mourn the loss of life and vow that something must be done. The unfortunate fact of the matter is that nothing will be done without all of us getting

involved. **It is time to get involved.**

Our Michigan Legislature is working on numerous bills that will impact gun Laws: everything from prohibiting guns at election sites, to extending criminal background checks, and gun safety storage requirements. Laws that would provide a way for limiting gun purchasing rights for those deemed at risk to themselves or others are also working their way through the State House and Senate. For more information on where these bills stand, go to the State League's web site at www.lwvmi.org. *League Links* is another resource. **Most importantly, when the State League sends out an action alert, respond.** The new platform is easy to use and you can reach your elected officials with a few clicks of your keyboard.

Just recently two action alerts were sent out concerning gun legislation and amendments to the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act that would bar discrimination based on sexual orientation. (I am happy to say the Elliot- Larsen Civil Rights Act was amended and signed into law on March 16th.)

Did you get both action alerts? Did you respond to the action alerts? Numbers matter and our number of responses is dismal. I know we all get way too many emails and alerts, but if yours have gotten lost in cyber space, you can find any up to date action alerts on the State web site under Advocacy. Take a moment to check if there are any you might have missed.

The people of Nashville are in mourning, just like the people of East Lansing and Oxford, Michigan are mourning. Our thoughts and prayers are not enough.

We need to take action.

Carrie

Carrie Moon-Dupree, President 734-454-4866

**In-Person General Membership Meeting
April 15, 10:00 a.m.**

Where: Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main St. Plymouth, MI. (Parking in the rear)

Topic: "What it Takes to Run for Elected Office and Why Do It?"

Panel made up of League members:

Carin Meyer - Northville School Board

Reggie Miller - 31st District State Representative

Lisa Martin, 34th District Court Judge

Linda Priest- Belleville District Library Board member

Anne Marie Graham-Hudak- Canton Township Supervisor

Moderator: Susan Rowe- Former City of Wayne Mayor

Meet and Greet after the panel with refreshments.

Guests are encouraged and welcomed.

The Northwest Wayne County League has many elected officials including school board, township supervisor, State Representative and two judges.

Please let Carrie know if you are planning to attend so we have enough refreshments. Call 734-454-4866

Virtual Forum from our Friends at Detroit LWV and Detroit Public Library, April 11

by Cheryl Bukoff, DLWV

This virtual forum will examine some of the current and recent changes to voting rights and democracy, with a particular focus on Michigan. We are looking forward to having Peter J. Hammer, Director of the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights, as our guest speaker. We hope you can join us for this important event. It is still necessary to keep our focus on voting rights even with and especially because of our new amendments that were voted into the Michigan Constitution.

Please RSVP using the link below.

<https://dpl-voting-democracy.eventbrite.com>

CALL TO CONVENTION

By Carrie Moon-Dupree

The League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne Co. is being called to our bi-annual State convention to be held on **May 19th through the 21st**. Because of our high membership numbers, we are allowed 6 voting delegates in addition to the president. As of this moment I only have 2 of us going to the convention and that means we have 5 votes that will not be cast.

At the convention we vote on bylaw changes, budget, program planning and the nominating committee report. Just as importantly, it is a chance to socialize with your fellow League members from across the State of Michigan.

All the convention information is on our State website. I need to let them know our voting delegates by **April 20th. Convention registration deadline is April 30th to avoid a penalty.**

Please consider going to the convention. We do reimburse for the expenses associated with the convention according to our reimbursement policy. All it takes is a time commitment from you. Please let me know at 734-454-4866 if you would like to attend.

Hope to see you there.

National Popular Vote!

*What does the National Popular Vote bill do?
Why does America need this?
How does the National Popular Vote bill work?*

Join us for a Zoom presentation to learn more
about this bill in the Michigan Legislature.

April 24, 2023, 7:00 pm
Click the Zoom link here.



Membership Update Our Work Continues

By Maureen Hughes

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 Scholarship Committee

By Toni Stokes-Jones, Ph.D.

The LWVNWWC Scholarship Committee is happy to announce that part or full-time students at Schoolcraft College who have a 2.0 GPA or higher will be eligible to apply for the \$1,000

Friedrichs/Bowman Scholarship this fall 2023. Full details about the scholarship and the application will be in the Scholarship Universe portal that students can access.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

By Laura Jannika

Our committee is learning how to carefully listen to the equity concerns of many diverse people. Recently, DEI member, Toni Jones, shared a video with our committee and Board members about Black women's concerns about equity in the health arena. It's not equal! She recommended a book: *Under the Skin* by Linda Villarosa.

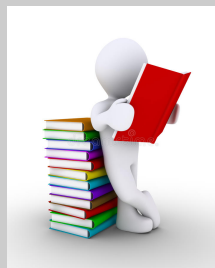
Another member, Lena Packer, has offered some ideas from an article about

disabilities, called "Challenges Faced by People with Disabilities":

When the American s with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted in 1990, many people were happy to see that the needs of people with disabilities would now be addressed. Unfortunately, they still face many challenges.

- 650,000 Michiganders with disabilities are living in poverty and are unable to afford the essentials needed for their medical care, let alone pay for child care, food, and housing.
- Many face physical obstacles getting to work such as cracked sidewalks or finding public transportation modified for their needs.
- If they are able to get to work, many encounter other barriers such as bathroom doors which cannot be opened without assistance.
- Voters who need large print ballots when voting in person may find some of their ballot cut off on the screen.
- Recently a Livonia dog rescue organization settled a civil rights complaint filed by a woman who uses a wheelchair. She claimed she was denied the opportunity to adopt a dog because of the stereotypes of people who use wheelchairs.

There are so many more stories like these. There is still work to be done to make our everyday experiences more inclusive.



DEI Committee Book Club

Our Book Club has met and made some decisions.

* We will meet on Zoom every two months, the 3rd Monday of the month, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

* Here are the dates and the books we chose for the rest of the year.

April 17: Continue with *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

June 19: *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of WomenVoters* by Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins

August 21: *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah. Moderator Marjorie Lynn

October 23: *The Bigot: Why Prejudice Persists* by Stephen Eric Bronner. Moderator Lena Packer

December 18: *Her Hidden Genius* by Marie Benedict. Moderator Barbara Zysk-Berman

The DEI Committee has been collecting titles of books and created a large, but not very diverse book list. Our group may choose from that OR add for purposes of our discussion other books to expand our scope.

We invite you to join us. Please contact James Moon-Dupree at jmoon-dupree242071mi@comcast.net for the Zoom link.

Voter Services

by Valerie Nelson

We are rethinking how to do the *Voter Guide* for next year's election and are exploring the idea of hiring a professional to layout our voter guide as a trial run. The *Voter Guide* needs to be created in a short period of time before elections, after all ballot information is available, but before absentee ballots are received by voters. This requires a lot of work in a short span of time, just when we need to be working on other election related projects such as voter forums. Our goal is to develop an improved process for next year's presidential election that reduces the long hours required by several volunteers.

They Represent You brochures have been delivered to all area libraries as well as well as Plymouth, Livonia, Van Buren Twp. senior centers, and Plymouth City and Township offices.

Thanks to Lois Baughman, Marjorie Lynn, Carrie Moon-Dupree, Susan Rowe, Lena Packer and Maureen Hughes for making these deliveries. *They Represent You* brochures provide voters with contact information for our elected officials including phone numbers, websites and emails for local, county, state and federal office holders for communities in our League's area.

The Fundraising Auction is Just 6 Months Away!

By Angela Ryan

October 14 will be here sooner than you think. The auction will be held at the Alexander Blue House at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia starting at 11:30 a.m. that day. *How can you get involved?* Consider donating any new or gently used items; plan a party that you could host (e.g., card, games, or luncheon); visit a local business to ask for a donation; and/or think about an event you could organize (e.g., a tour of a small museum or other venue), or make a financial donation.

At the Annual Meeting, you'll have the opportunity to sign up to assist in various ways before or at the auction. The more members who participate in this fun endeavor, the lighter the load will be for each one of you. **So, mark your calendar now.** It's the one fundraiser held each year to support the activities of the League in our local communities, and *your contribution will add to its success.*

Observer Corps Report from an Observer

By Donna Gilkey-Lavin

ZERO TO HERO!

I live in a community that has the largest man made lake in Wayne County

plus, the largest man made and most toxic dump. It's a beautiful and historic community with many amenities. Dams were created on the Huron River to produce electricity for the Ford Ypsilanti Plant. These dams also formed Ford and Belleville Lakes and are close to the surrounding communities. The toxic waste dump, US Ecology/Wayne Disposal Inc., accepts toxic and super fund cleanup site wastes from across the United States and Canada and was initially created in an area of rural communities. Right now, there is nothing our community can do to change this situation, so we are keeping it under the microscope.

We have a really good township government which established an Environmental Commission. I was excited to observe it as part of our Observer Corps. Unfortunately, after the first two meetings I attended in late 2021, my excitement turned to concern and then dismay. Month after month I had to report "meeting was cancelled, due to lack of quorum." This went on for a year. I consulted with our League President and was told I could voice my concerns to our Township Supervisor as a private citizen but not as a League member. (LWV policy: The League speaks on an issue after it's been studied and voted on, after which the President speaks for the League.) So that's what I did, as often as I could. I finally received a commitment from the Supervisor that the commission would resume meetings and, in the fall of last year (2022), they did.

I am happy to report that the meetings I have attended have been professional, educational, informative and well run. The board members and township personnel are well informed and are committed to keeping our township as safe as possible until stricter regulations are enforced by the state and EPA. So, this commission went from zero to hero in my estimation. If you want to know what's in the Huron River, the lakes fed by it, our wetlands and dumps, ask me. **Observation and the Observer Corps work!**

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

Happy Spring!



League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County Board of Directors

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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.

League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County | PO Box 51502, Livonia, MI 48151

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