

Voter

September/October 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

LWVNW League Calendar

September 15 - October 15: Hispanic Heritage Month

<https://latino.si.edu/learn/teaching-and-learning-resources/hispanic-heritage-month-resources>

September 29: Absentee Ballots Available for General Election

October 10, 2023: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Zoom Meeting 7:00. Speaker Sarah Dagostino, "Voting as a Stutterer."

October 14, 2023: Fundraising Auction, Alexander Blue House at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia. [Auction Donor Form](#)

October 23, 2023: DEI Book Club, Zoom 7 - 8:30 pm *The Bigot: Why Prejudice Persists* jmoondupree242071mi@comcast.net

November 7, 2023: Election Day. Check our [Vote 411](#).

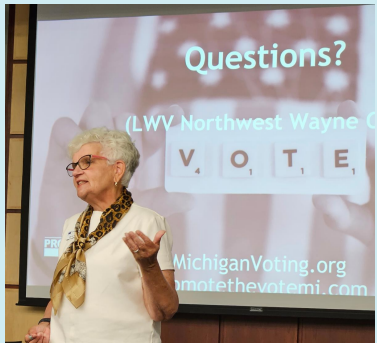
December 10, 2023: Holiday party at the Baughman's. Details TBD.

Check out the [League's Calendar Page](#) for up-to-date information on events.
<https://my.lww.org/michigan/northwest-wayne-county/calendar>



President's Perspective:

By Carrie Moon-Dupree



What are you most proud of in your life? I find as I age, I am more reflective of what I've accomplished and more thoughtful about what I have yet to do. Maybe you are proud of your family or your home. Perhaps you find peace in what you accomplished in your career or travels. Whatever you are proud of, I would hazard a guess you haven't listed "Saving Democracy" in that list and you should. The League is daily defending democracy.

The League of Women Voters is a "grassroots organization." Without you, our work would not be as great and impactful as it is. I know some of you are weary. We have been working non-stop these last few years and it doesn't look like it is going to slow down soon. Our League is preparing for the upcoming Presidential Election, as well as State-wide elections. We want to make sure that all our "ducks are in a row" to hit the ground running. I also know that not all of you can devote lots of time or money; that doesn't matter. What matters is that you are aware of what the issues are, what positions the League takes on the issues and help out where you can. There are always a multitude of opportunities to choose from to get involved. Not all the opportunities require lots of money or time, but rather a desire to defend democracy.

Think of the suggestions below as a menu you can pick and choose from. What are you going to choose so that you too can say, "I am proud that I defended Democracy when it needed defending."

- * Volunteer to work at the polls
- * Share your connections with the League. Are you a member of an organization where we could do a town hall meeting on an important issue facing voters? Or ask for a donation to print our paper Voter Guides.
- * Volunteer to help the Voter Service team with a forum, voter registration drive, voter guide or
- * Deliver brochures to libraries in our area.
- * Observe your government in action and become a member of the Observer Corps.
- * Attend the auction, **October 14, 2023** and bring a friend. Donate and of course, bid.
- * Bring refreshments to a meeting when asked.
- * Educate your family and friends on the issues.
- * Put a Vote411 yard sign out when we have them available.

* Tell others you are a member of the League and why

There is no down time in defending Democracy!

This is just a smattering of the possibilities to get involved. Still unsure where you could help? Then let's have lunch. I've been meeting with members who are on our roster, but I haven't gotten a chance to know. I randomly pick a name and extend an invitation. Want to get to the head of the list, let me know you would like to do lunch and we will set a date to meet and explore the ways the League works to save democracy.

Carrie Moon-Dupree, President
moondupree@comcast.net 734-454-4866

BE a Part of This Year's Auction!

By Donna Gilkey-Lavin

COME to our League's fundraising auction **October 14** at the Alexander Blue House at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia, starting at **11:30 a.m.** We want as many members as possible to **attend** the auction and **bring guests**.

You can **donate** any new or gently used items; use the Donor Form link in the Calendar above, and bring it in about 11 so we can get it ready for the sale.

Of course, you can make a monetary donation and be **an Auction Angel**.

You may have signed up to volunteer but we can always use more help.

If you have questions, please contact Donna Gilkey-Lavin at 734-546-6653 or donna@lavinlift.com.

General Membership Meeting Recap

By Marjorie Lynn



We held an in-person General Membership Meeting September 12, 7:00 pm at the Belleville Independent District Library in downtown Belleville. Carrie Moon-Dupree gave the LWVMI presentation on Michigan's new Constitutional Amendment, Proposal 2 which amended the Michigan Constitution to expand several voter rights. Many local Leagues--and we are one!--are presenting town hall meetings about the new voting rights to support legislation and funding to implement Promote the Vote 2022.

There is a grant available from LWVMI. We can earn \$300 for presenting at one meeting and \$100 for each of 3 additional meetings. Carrie is asking for volunteers to co-present with her; Toni Stokes Jones and Sandy Main-Niemisto volunteered. <https://lwvmi.org/>

Women's Equality Day Celebration By Carrie Moon-Dupree

The annual Women's Equality Day celebration was held on Saturday, August 26, 2023 at St. Mary's Cultural Center in Livonia. This celebration was sponsored by The American Association of University Women (AAUW). Partners included the League of Women Voters MI, as well as the Coalition of Labor Union Women/ Metro Detroit, International Federation of Business Professional Women, International League for Peace and Freedom/Metro Detroit, ACE Women's network, NOW, and Zonta International.

Many attendees wore their Suffrage colors, white, purple and gold. I included my "Votes for Women" sash. Sashes and other items were available for sale at various tables. After lunch and networking, we were able to hear some incredible speakers. The keynote speaker was **Megan Kissell**, AAUW, Sr. Dir. of Policy and Member Advocacy. I hadn't realized before that so many of the issues the League advocates for are the same issues AAUW promotes. We are truly like-minded organizations. Other speakers included our own **Laura Carter Callow**, who once again reminded us of the long fight for equal rights and the Equal Rights Amendment. The fight is still not over. Rep. **Laurie Pohutsky** gave a legislative update that was encouraging. **Shelia Blair**, president of AAUWMI rounded out the speakers. The emcee was **Mickey Edell**.

Sometimes we get so busy fighting the good fight, that we forget to celebrate our successes and the people who make that happen. It always renews me to sit with other like-minded women and recharge my batteries. I will continue to look forward to this annual luncheon for inspiration and fellowship.

Voter Services

by Valerie Nelson

We have completed five candidate forums for this year's general election. Livonia treasurer and city clerk, Northville city council and Westland city council are virtual forums, and the Plymouth City Commission forum was held in-person at Plymouth City Hall at 7 pm on October 3rd. You can view the recordings of all of our forums as they become available at our League's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@LWVofNorthwestWayneCounty411>.

Vote411.org has been populated and is ready for your use to determine your choices for November 7. Thank you to Megan Chenoweth for her hard work on Vote411. Thank you also to Jackie Peters for producing forums, and Carrie Moon-Dupree, Susan Rowe, and Paula Bowman for moderating.

If you would like to produce a candidate forum, or help a producer with a candidate forum, please let me know at vnelson@prodigy.net or 734-512-0344

Voter Registration

by Ann Andrews

At the Schoolcraft College event, Schooldaze, September 18 - 19, 10 individuals completed voter registration applications. Thanks to Lena Packer for her help and mentoring.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Committee

By Laura Jannika

Our group has been looking into accessibility in the elections, and members of the LWVMI have been talking to clerks in our areas about safe elections and the accessibility of the polling places and drop offs, especially after Proposal 2 was passed last year.

We have a wonderful speaker scheduled for our next DEI meeting on October 10th via Zoom at 7pm: Sarah Dagostino, who will speak to us about the difficulties in voting while being a stutterer. She was a stutterer and is now a speaker for the National Stuttering Association. She is very passionate about helping people and speaks all over the country for stuttering conventions. She stated the hardest thing for a stutterer to say is their own name. As you can imagine this could be a problem when going to vote. If you would like to hear Sarah speak at our meeting, just let me know and you will get a Zoom meeting invite. You can reach me at jannika@gmail.com.

Finally, we are making a DEI basket for the LWV Auction on the 14th. Our topic is the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion of SENIORS. Our group is always looking at equity aspects and how we are affected by our treatment of others, as well as how we are treated. Our age is another way to treat someone "less than."

Be Kind

Send me a note at ljannika@gmail.com with DEI in the subject. Thank you.

DEI Committee Book Club

By Marjorie Lynn



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

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

Postponed *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters* by Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins

We invite you to join us. Please contact James Moon-Dupree at jmoondupree242071mi@comcast.net for the Zoom link.

Here is a [link to the Committee's Book List](#)

Scholarship Committee Update

by Toni Stokes-Jones

We have awarded two scholarships via our work with Schoolcraft College. Both women, **Amy Golm** and **Sanaa Keradi**, are Nursing students. Each will get \$500 from us for both fall and winter terms, plus Schoolcraft added another \$500. We have also given each of them a year of student membership. Congratulations!

Observer Corps

By Lena Packer

How are decisions made in your community? Do residents have a voice at these meetings? What factors are considered in the process? Members of the Observer Corps volunteer to attend meetings, in-person or virtually, to watch local government in action and learn more about the issues concerning residents.

We are always looking for new observers. You do not have to live in the same community as the group you are observing. If you are interested in becoming an observer or would like more information about our group, please contact Lena Packer at lena.packer@yahoo.com or 734-634-1728

Observation and the Observer Corps work!

You can watch Michigan House and Senate proceedings. Go to <https://www.house.mi.gov> and <https://www.senate.michigan.gov>

Polling Place Accessibility for Disabled Voters A Report

by Marjorie Lynn

September 11-15, 2023 was declared Disability Voting Rights Week in many

communities. Paula Bowman sent information to those of us in the League's Communication Network about several webinars offered by **Detroit Disability Power** to discuss voting place accessibility, or lack of it. I "attended" two, one informative about the study, the other a training workshop from which I gleaned lots of resources to help our DEI Committee as we begin our examination of local courthouses.

The first hour of one 3-part webinar featured Dessa Cosma, founder of Detroit Disability Power, and Kenia Flores speaking about their 2022 Report of their audit of polling place accessibility, *Voting Accessibility for Detroit Voters with Disabilities*. The full report is available at <https://www.detroitdisabilitypower.org/pollaudit>. They audited 261 sites in and around Metro Detroit on Election Day, November 8, 2022. With support from the Carter Center to develop a very thorough process, they found **only 16% that passed all four of the requirements completely**. Categories include accessible parking with clear, level pathways into the building, accessible entries, fully accessible Voter Assist Terminals plugged in and turned on and at the right height for wheelchairs and an accessible booth to cast paper ballots privately. Many problems could be remedied readily, such as moving trash cans holding a door open. But these fixes need awareness and intentionality. Clerks need to be sure to train their workers. The report has been shared with the appropriate State offices.

Although the Americans with Disabilities Act, Voting Rights Act, and the Help America Vote Act set some requirements, still a gap of 1.5% exists. Yes, absentee ballot availability has certainly helped, but there are problems with those also such as dropbox availability. "Some of us like to vote in person so as to be a part of the process; it should be available," said Dessa. Discovering that this is the way things are at polling places, the issues provoke wider implications. We have some work to do.

For more information about disability rights, go to <https://www.detroitdisabilitypower.org>

ADVOCACY INFORMATION

LWVMI SUPPORTS NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE: LWVMI supports House Bill 4156 and Senate Bill 126, which are in their second reading in committee and are apparently stuck there. Contact your Representative or Senator and let them know you'd like to see it brought to a vote this session.

Here's a link to a piece by Paula Bowman and Denise Hartsough published in Bridge Michigan October 2.

Opinion: Pass the National Popular Vote

To identify state proposed legislation that is supported by the LWVMI, please go to the **Advocacy 2023** page on the **LWVMI website**. Check **"Take Action"** for current action alerts.

Two resources are recommended for looking up Michigan legislation:

New Members



Meredith Conte
Gayle Conte
Kevin Martin
Daksha Pandit

And our two Scholarship winners: Amy Golm and Sanaa Keradi

League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County Board of Directors

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Auction: Donna Gilkey-Lavin

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

Laura Jannika

Financial Review: Nancy White

Legislative Interviews: Susan Rowe

Membership: Maureen Hughes

Nominating: Linda Curry

Observer Corps: Lena Packer

Scholarship: Toni Jones, Co-chair

Voter Registration: Ann Andrews

Voter Service: Val Nelson

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

Membership in the League is open to anyone age 16 & older. Dues: Student \$5, Individual \$60, Household \$90. Join through our website or call 734-595-8564.

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

[Visit our website](#)

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[League of Women Voters of Michigan website](#)

[League of Women Voters of US](#)

policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

website



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