

League Links - January 2020
Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

President's Message



Congratulations to the Tecumseh/Lenawee County Geographical Unit of LWV Ann Arbor Area on having their application to become a LWVMI State MAL (Member-At-Large) Unit supported by the board unanimously at the meeting of 11 January 2020. They demonstrated the LWV mission of empowering voters and defending democracy through their programs, organizational structure and the intention to continue to grow in the service of their community. Nancy Schewe, former president of the LWVAAA, mentored their progress over the past couple years. Jan Salsberry and Carolyn Vertin, as unit co-chairs, proved to be effective leaders. The geographical unit was also coached by VP

Membership, Paula Manley.

Our Leagues, MAL Units and Geographical Units have been working hard to further the MDW (Make Democracy Work) agenda through a number of town hall presentations. Of our 26 Leagues/MALs, 24 have signed up to present the Census, CRC (Citizens' Redistricting Commission) and Voting Rights information since last fall. Many have held multiple town hall meetings that reached a great number of communities and many more are scheduled. We will be wrapping up that series at the end of March.

But the Census and CRC and voting rights continue to be hot topics. The Census begins on 1 April, the deadline for submitting applications to be on the redistricting commission ends 1 June with the selection process happening until the full commission of 13 is seated to begin their task by the 15th of October. AND we have important elections this year!

At a meeting last week with Loida Tapia, Director of Public Engagement from the MISOS, she indicated that 250,000 randomly selected applications were sent to registered voters in Michigan in early December. During the first week of January almost 1500 were received daily. From the citizen-initiated applications, 6000 have been received, with 2000 complete applications. Ms. Tapia indicated that the main reason applications are incomplete is the *notary signature was missing*. This is a mandatory part of the application. The notary signature is verification of the applicant's identity.

Ms. Tapia asked us to encourage League members to help out in this respect. If you are a notary and are willing to offer your service free for this process, please email the MISOS. (Please see the article from Paula Bowman.) We encourage all of you to apply to be on the commission as well. We worked hard to pass this law to move the power to the people; now we have to step up!

As we discussed our partnership with the MISOS, Ms. Tapia asked to encourage League members to become election poll workers. League members are knowledgeable about the new voting rights laws and are particularly interested in the integrity of the voting process. (Please refer to an article by LWVMI Secretary, Leah Bectel, about her experience as a poll worker.)

More opportunities for short term employment for League members include becoming a Census worker. You can apply online and become part of the force to help with a complete count at this [link](#).

Counting everyone Michigan is critical to avoid losing a seat in Congress after this

census. And Federal funding is driven by the count.

The LWVMI Membership Committee is planning 2020 Spring Workshops for all LWVMI members from our local Leagues. We will be announcing very soon the dates and locations. Plans are for one to be held in April in the lower peninsula and a second one in May hosted by one of our upper peninsula Leagues. Look to our website (lwvmi.org) for more information and registration.

There is plenty of time to register your League's *Day of Action* event celebrating the passage of the 19th amendment and the birth of LWV. You can go to this link (You can [register your event with us](#) by January 30th to be eligible to win \$200!) on the LWVUS website to register. (Please see the article in this newsletter by Maria Rivera.) Events will be held throughout the year and we would like to know what your League has planned. Please send pictures and articles to president@lwvmi.org. In addition, we have formed a speakers' bureau if you are in need of someone at your event. Please send your request to the same email address.

And you thought all you had to do was register voters!

One more announcement: our newly hired executive director resigned before Christmas for a full time, full-benefit position. We have begun the process to fill the office staff opening with an Administrative Professional (look for the job opening listing in MNA). Anyone interested in the position or who knows someone who may be interested, please direct their name and contact information to president@lwvmi.org. The LWVMI board has approved an additional office support position of Off-Board Assistant Treasurer and has appointed Judy Karandjeff to that role.

Thank you all for your hard work.

In League,
Christina

Voter Services



The impact of Michigan's new Voting Rights laws will be felt soon. From now, leading up to and including Election Day March 10 - the Presidential Primary – it's full steam ahead! All the 1,500+ clerk offices, the organizations who are mobilizing and educating voters and eligible citizens, and so many others have been and will be striving to prepare and manage the large turnout which is expected. Absentee ballots will be available beginning January 25.

There is an excellent Q & A about the Presidential Primary on the Michigan Bureau of Elections - [click here](#).

Michigan Voting Rights Presentation – The PowerPoint, Script & Handout were revised on January 17, and will be revised again after January 23, when new resources will be available. The KNOW YOUR VOTING RIGHTS (familiar to many as the ACLU pamphlet) will then be available electronically in English, Arabic and Spanish. It will be Election-specific; the first one will be specific to the March 10 Election.

Voting Rights Flyers – 2 handouts on Voting Rights – depending on your preference and needs – are available on the League's website, www.lwvmi.org

Clerk Engagement Coalition – Convened by the ACLU-Michigan, this coalition to provide voting rights advocacy and assistance to local clerks in about 60 municipalities with an identified history of voting rights issues. The goal is to build a sustainable model so that organizations such as the LWV can work with their local clerks to ensure voting rights are monitored as well as to offer assistance in recruiting qualified Poll Workers, and in other ways that might be appreciated. Voting Rights attorneys would be consulted as resources. If you have been involved or would like to be involved in this program, please contact Betsy Cushman at betsy.cushman@gmail.com.

Election Protection Coalition A coalition of multiple organizations, led by Sharon Dolente of the ACLU of Michigan, whose purpose is in the title. This is sharing resources so that all organizations who are promoting voter engagement have opportunities to work together and to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.

Reminder: Poll Workers (Election Inspectors) are crucial to Voter Protection. They make a difference by being welcoming, knowledgeable, and efficient. Please help recruit the people you know who would make good poll workers, and ask them to apply in communities which have a need. You don't have to be a resident of that community, only a registered voter.

-- Betsy Cushman
LWVMI VP, Voter Services

Advocacy Committee Update

The LWVMI Advocacy Committee met in January and recommended to the LWVMI Board the following priorities for LWVUS:
Campaign for Making Democracy Work with special emphasis on voting rights; watchdog other issues: Affordable Care Act, climate change and immigration.

The Committee also recommended these priorities for LWVMI:
Redistricting, campaign finance, fair courts, voting rights, environmental sustainability, public education, social justice equity and public health & safety.

The Committee voted to oppose the Right to Life Ballot Proposal that would limit access to legal abortions in Michigan. The signatures for the initiative have been presented to the State Board of Canvassers and are being reviewed.

The Committee also voted to support and to support [SB 14](#) and the [new rules](#) for Supplying Water for the Public that address PFAS.

The LWVMI Board supported the committee's recommendations. Also attached is an [update on action](#) taken by LWVMI to date.

-- Judy Karandjeff,
Chair Advocacy Committee

Program Planning



planning paragraph).

In anticipation of decisions that must be made at the LWVUS convention in June, LWVUS is asking all local Leagues to participate in LWVUS program planning. You can find the [information link](#) on our website on the Member Resources Page. The deadline for submitting responses is March 10, 2020.

Delegates to the convention will also be asked to concur with a new position already endorsed by the LWVUS Board on [Electoral Systems](#). No local study is needed for a concurrence. Information about this proposed position is also available on our website (right underneath the program

-- Paula Bowman
LWVMI, VP Program

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Update

The January board meeting took place via Zoom (web-conference software) because of bad weather. We decided to wait until we are in the same room together to have a discussion about privilege. Instead, I shared some reading, watching, and visiting I did that helped me deepen my DEI practice.

Stella Young's TED Talk "I'm Not Your Inspiration" [Click here](#)



points out that the able-bodied world see people with disabilities as objects of inspiration, not real people. With humor and directness, she exposes "inspiration porn" for what it is: graphic representations of people with disabilities accompanied by a quote that essentially says "See? Your life could be worse. You could be this disabled person."

Then, while visiting my in-laws in Georgia, I further educated myself (a white, cisgender, middle-class woman with a lot of privilege) by reading *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and visiting the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta. *Americanah* is a good novel featuring the compelling protagonist, Ifemelu, a young Nigerian woman who emigrates to the US and works on forging her own identity as a smart and funny writer while becoming an American citizen. Her observations of white middle-class Americans and race relations in the US are sharp and clear. *Americanah* is also a story of making your way as a young adult, trying to find love and meaningful work. I recommend it. The National Center for Civil and Human Rights helped me to better understand the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the US and the human rights violations that happen all over the world today.

-- Tera Moon,
Director, DEI Coach

Advocacy: Climate Change Activism at Oakland University

LWVMI Advocacy Committee – Oakland University
“FSSACE” – Faculty-Staff-Student Alliance for Climate and Environment

Oakland University faculty, staff and students organized the FSSACE in September 2019 to address concerns regarding climate, environment and related issues. During its monthly meetings on its campus in Rochester Hills, informational speakers have presented lectures on the following topics:

-- “Accidental Activism: Pipeline Fighting in Michigan and Beyond” – a faculty member’s personal battle with BIG OIL that claimed eminent domain and installed miles of pipelines in his rural community destroying forests, natural habitats, etc.

-- “Water Speak” - a disturbing perspective of how years of mismanagement of water resources in Flint, Detroit and elsewhere resulted in shut-offs, homelessness, and health hazards affecting the most vulnerable of our community.

The next lecture will be January 21, 2020, 11:30 am in the Kresge Library, Room 225B. Faculty member, Laura Landolt, will present “Living with Climate Grief.” All meetings are open to the public.

As a member of the LWVMI Advocacy Committee following climate change, I am attending these meetings.

--Maria Wooloson,
President LWVOA

Fun, Power, and Celebration: Feb. 14 - Day of Action

LWVUS is calling for a national *Day of Action* around the theme: Women Power the Vote on February 14, the 100th birthday of the League. The *Day of Action* is an opportunity for Leagues across the country to participate in a shared moment to celebrate the birthday and honor our legacy. So far, 12 Leagues in Michigan have signed up to participate. There’s still time! Check out the *Day of Action* Toolkit: www.lwv.org/dayofaction where you’ll also find a sign-up form.

A goal of the *Day of Action* is to show a large number of media/social network posts aimed at drawing attention to the fact that the League is still defending democracy

after all these years. We gave some examples of *Day of Action* ideas in the last issue of League Links, but here they are again in case you need some inspiration:

- Hold a voter registration event
- Meet in a member's home and send postcards to legislators thanking them for their votes on voting rights legislation (then take a photo to post on social media)
- Knock on doors in your neighborhood and deliver a Get out the Vote message
- Write a letter to the editor about the impact of the League in your community
- Send out social media messages that highlight the League's work
- Write a complimentary note on the social media page of organizations your League has partnered with, thanking them for helping with the League's mission
- Conduct a town hall meeting about Michigan's new voting rights, the 2020 Census, or Michigan's Redistricting Commission, being sure to announce the birthday of the League
- Think 100: how about delivering 100 cookies to your local clerk and telling her/him thanks for all their work? Or to your local reference librarian who has helped distribute voter guides? Or to a local radio station with a note bragging about the work the League has done?
- Host a movie night – how about Iron Jawed Angels?
- Post on-line vignettes of some of your League members- why did they join the League?

We also want to feature your events on our social media, so please send your ideas and pictures to president@lwvmi.org.

-- Maria Rivera
LWVMI Director at Large

Provide a Service: Become a Notary

Anyone applying to be on Michigan's Redistricting Commission must have their application notarized. Though there is a list of notaries on the Secretary of State's website that will do this for free, you may want to become a notary so you can help out applicants in your community in the future.

Becoming a notary in Michigan is easy, but it does require an application, a \$10,000 insurance bond, and taking an oath at your County Clerk's office. All this adds up to charges of \$50-\$100, but the term is for 6 years. I suggest that you go through a notary company. [Michigan Notary Service](#) is a reliable Michigan company that I used for years in my work life.

Keep in mind that in Michigan, no seal or stamp is required, nor is a notary training class, a logbook or a notary manual. Notary companies will try to sell you all kinds of gadgets and 'extras' once your application is on record at the state. Let me know if you have any questions.

-- Paula Bowman, VP Program

Local League Spotlight

Congratulations to LWV

Tecumseh/Lewanee County for achieving MAL (Member at Large) status! They began as a Geographical Unit under the mentorship of LWVAAA almost three years ago. During the LWVMI Board meeting on January 11, their application to become a MAL unit was approved. They have been an active group conducting a candidate forum, registering voters at local events and in the local high schools, reaching out to the underserved citizens in their county and observing city

council and school board meetings. Thanks to leaders Jan Salsberry and Carolyn Vertin and all the members for working so diligently these past several years to establish the League in Tecumseh/Lenawee County so that Democracy may work in their community!



Tecumseh/Lenawee Board members:
front: Jeanne Knight and Carolyn Vertin
top: Louise Salamin and Jan Salsberry

LWV Macomb MAL recently participated in the first of several "Listening Events" in Macomb County, sponsored by Detroit Public TV. LWV Macomb Chair Katherine LaBuhn developed a tri-fold brochure to hand out to candidates explaining VOTE411 and candidate forums. Since the League's services are so new to Macomb, this will hopefully familiarize candidates with LWV.

Congratulations to LWV of Jackson Area who recently was awarded \$4750 in a competitive grant process in their community for Census outreach.

LWV Ann Arbor Area. Margaret Leary and her committee that have been conducting town hall meetings focusing on the 2020 Census have reached over 1000 people as of last week! Thank you to Margaret and committee!

LWV Lake Michigan Inter-League Organization (ILO). The LWVMI board has appointed Tricia Denton, president of the Leelanau League, to the LWVMI ILO board of directors to replace Ruth Caputo who recently resigned. Tricia is very active with water environmental issues and organizations. Tricia is a leader in the advocacy to shut down Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac. Tricia is pleased to be a part of the board of the LWV Lake Michigan ILO.

Become an Election Worker!



Dearest League Member,

You would make a wonderful election worker!

From,

a current election worker

There has been an urgent need for poll workers in the upcoming 2020 elections in Michigan to help administer accurate elections and follow existing and new laws. The passage of Proposal 3 has caused increases in absentee voting and voter registrations leading up to and on election day. These new laws add to the already robust process of administering elections! I am of the opinion that the best candidate for poll workers are the League members throughout the State of Michigan!

Our passion and knowledge of voting rights can provide the perfect enthusiasm and baseline knowledge for learning how to efficiently work an election. One of my first jobs when I turned 16 years old was working local elections for my township! What started out as just a way to earn good money turned into a passion for election laws, voting rights, and democratic processes in general. I credit the elections I worked in my high school years to building my desire for civic engagement and eventually

joining the Copper Country League in college. I continue to work elections for my parents' township to this day and just received my training this past week.

I encourage you to reach out to your municipality to see if they still need workers for the upcoming primary - I would bet they still do. Trainings for the March primary are likely occurring right about now, and there will also be elections in May, August, and, of course, November.

I can promise you the feeling of helping administer an election for your local government is truly special, and the pay is more than fair. If you have any questions about the learning curve, what to expect, etc., please feel free to reach out to me! I know I'll be brushing up on election laws in the coming months in preparation for this crazy year.

Cheers to such an important year - I'm already rolling up my sleeves to get to work.

-- Leah Bectel
Secretary, LWVMI

In Memoriam

Bernice S. "Sunny" Morse died after a short illness Tuesday, October 29, 2019, at the Chelsea Retirement Community in Chelsea, Michigan. She was 103 years old and was a member of the League of Women Voters for over 50 years.

Born in Warren, Pennsylvania, in 1916, Sunny married William C. Morse of Erie, Pennsylvania, in 1937. Sunny and Bill lived for 70 years in Ann Arbor where Bill earned a PhD and became a professor of education and psychology at the University of Michigan. The couple personally built their own home on Penncraft Court in 1944 as part of a cooperative of friends. The cooperative spirit of the court continued over the years to provide a close-knit community for them and their children.

Sunny was active all her life in civic and volunteer service. As part of her work as a lifetime member of the *League of Women Voters* she monitored the juvenile court system, served on the state board, supporting fledgling local leagues around the state, and registered new voters in the high schools. She volunteered as a tutor of children and as an exercise class instructor for seniors. Her love of learning and dedication to her community work led her to take classes in each of these areas. She had a life-long interest in women's rights and women's issues in the law and audited legal classes at the university. She also participated in peace vigils over the years.

Sunny will be remembered as a beloved mother, grandmother, aunt, and friend, and a spirited woman of great humor, grace, commitment, and intellect. She will be very deeply missed.

Commemorative contributions may be sent to the Chelsea Retirement Community Benevolent Fund or the Michigan League of Women Voters.

For more information on contributions and a chance to share memories and photographs, please visit sunnymorsetribute.com.



January 2020

Local Leagues

Ann Arbor Area
Berrien/Cass Counties
Copper Country
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
Delta County
Detroit
Eastern UP State (MAL) Unit
Flint Area
Grand Haven Area
Grand Traverse Area (with Crawford
County Geographical Unit)
Grosse Pointe
Holland Area

31 membership count deadline

February 2020

- Youth Voter Month
- Local Budget Committee should be meeting. Include funds to send delegates to Convention.
- Bylaws Committee should be meeting. Look at bylaws for possible amendments.
- Initiate plans for 2020 Elections
- Plan a fundraising event
- MLD* Monthly Networking Telephone Meetings

8 LWVMI Board meeting (League Links to follow)

14 LWV's 100th birthday – hold a League luncheon or tea and CELEBRATE!!

17 Presidents' Day

[Jackson Area](#)
[Kalamazoo Area](#) (with Grand Rapids Geographical Unit)
[Lansing Area](#)
[Leelanau County](#)
[Macomb State \(MAL\) Unit](#)
[Manistee County](#)
[Marquette County](#)
[Midland Area](#)
[Mt. Pleasant](#)
[Northeast Michigan](#) (formerly Alpena County)
[Northwest Wayne County](#) (with Belleville Geographical Unit)
[Oakland Area](#)
[Saginaw County](#)
Tecumseh/Lenawee County (MAL)
[Troy](#)

For more information go to www.lwvmi.org or check out Facebook pages for state and local LWVs

LWVMI Board of Directors - 2019-2021

Christina Schlitt (Grand Traverse Area) - President
Paula Manley (Kalamazoo) - Vice President for Membership
Betsy Cushman (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights) - Vice President for Voter Services
Sue Smith (Ann Arbor) - Vice President for Advocacy
Paula Bowman (NW Wayne County) - Vice President for Program
Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo) - Treasurer
Leah Bectel (Kalamazoo/Grand Rapids Geo) - Secretary
Darlene Allen (Marquette MAL) - Director-at-Large
Deborah Bunkley (Detroit) - Voter Service Director
Megan Chenoweth (Northwest Wayne County) - Voter Services Director
Vicki Granger (Grosse Pointe) - Communications Director
Ken Manley (Kalamazoo) - Local League Development Director
Tera Moon (Oakland) - Membership/Leadership Director
Diana Neering (Ann Arbor) - LWVMI Development Director
Maria Rivera (Macomb State MAL) - Director-at-Large

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