

## League Links - July 2020

*Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*

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## *President's Message*



### **Voter Suppression!**

You as a League member can do something right now to prevent voter suppression due to closing of polling locations because of the lack of poll workers. Please become a poll worker and encourage your friends, students, family to join you.

Election workers are democracy's Most Valuable Players. Democracy is a team sport and every Election Day, thousands of Michigan citizens come together to assist voters and process ballots.

This year, in both a statewide primary on 4 August and the presidential election in November, very large numbers of citizens are expected to vote by mail *and also* at polling locations. One of the best ways you can help today is by signing up to serve as an election worker on Election Day to assist voters and count ballots. Election workers are the front lines of our democracy.

Even in the midst of a global pandemic, democracy will march on in August and November. Election workers are pivotal to the success of these upcoming elections and will adhere to health guidelines and best practices to keep all staff and voters safe.

If you are a registered voter in Michigan looking to do your part in this critical moment, learn more and sign up at [Michigan.gov/DemocracyMVP](http://Michigan.gov/DemocracyMVP). If you're not yet registered to vote but would like to get involved, you can register to vote online (at [Michigan.gov/VoterRegistration](http://Michigan.gov/VoterRegistration)) and then sign up to serve as an election worker. You will be paid for your time on Election Day, and you will be a crucial part of the team helping to protect and defend Michigan's

elections.

[Apply today](#) and join the team. Our democracy needs you now more than ever. ([Michigan.gov/sos](https://Michigan.gov/sos))

**What is an election worker and what do they do?** Go to this [site](#).

Please post the message on your websites, Twitter pages and newsletters. There are great graphics on this site.

So far there is a shortage of poll workers in many communities. Please sign up and recruit!

In addition, consider volunteering to help your local clerks to process absentee ballots. Please see the article below from LWV Holland Area. The Grosse Pointe League also helped one of their local clerks.

## **Election Protection Task Force**

LWVUS has organized an Election Protection Task Force including national board members, national staff and state League presidents. We are reviewing opportunities to address issues that may arise that have the potential to adversely challenge our elections. More details to follow as they are developed.

Thank you.

-- Christina Schlitt, LWVMI President



Betsy Cushman



Denise Hartsough



Paula Manley

## **LWVUS National Convention Reflections**

The LWVUS Virtual Convention was spectacular, all things considered. I felt like I was a part of each session, an amazing feat for the Convention planners. Chris Carson and Christina Davis and all who made them look good handled this wonderfully.

Attending the preconvention opportunities, especially the Resolutions Committee Meeting and hearing the Black Lives Matter statement, was great.

Special moments included arriving "early" at the Expanding the Vote panel and seeing that these famous people - Valerie Jarrett, Muriel Bowser - were real people, arriving early themselves and checking their emails while they waited.

I attended

- Voting Rights Across the Lifespan workshop (lowering the voting age), from LWV of Boston (MA) [View Recording Here](#) (Password: 3a!A7J92)
- Increasing Turnout Caucus, Engaging Non-Voters & Seldom Voters in Lowest Turnout Precincts, from LWV of Port Washington-Manhasset (NY) This caucus was live-streamed to their [Facebook](#) page.
- How to Host a Successful Candidate Forum, from LWV Illinois. [View the Recording Here](#)

Other Materials: [Caucus Chat Log](#) and [Caucus Q&A](#)

I didn't anticipate being as engaged and inspired as I was by all the presentations and events. I was looking forward to a behind-the-scenes talk from Nora O'Donnell, but she didn't even seem interested in the LWV. The good thing was it was brief.

Virginia Kase's remarks were touching, and I was inspired by both Virginia and Deborah Turner, as we return to our busy League lives. NOTE: Virginia is the LWVUS CEO (staff), and Deborah is now the LWVUS President (volunteer).

-- [Betsy Cushman](#), LWVMI VP Voter Services

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The experience, skills and ingenuity of local/state Leagues evident in the LWVUS Convention caucuses and workshops impressed me! Two of special relevance to my local League covered candidate forums and voter outreach strategies.

- [How to Host a Successful Candidate Forum](#)
- [Engaging Nonvoters and Seldom Voters in Low Turnout Precincts](#)

-- Denise Hartsough, LWVMI Treasurer

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The 54th LWVUS Biennial Convention was quite different from past conventions as it was held virtually.

While I missed the opportunity to meet with Leaguers from around the country and network, there were advantages to being in the virtual world. Attendance was larger than I had seen at other Conventions, perhaps because there was not the barrier of travel and expense. Over 1200 delegates were in attendance from 50 states, D.C. and the Virgin Islands. More Leaguers could sign up as observers as they did not need to be in person. Instead of rushing from caucuses and workshops and plenary meetings from early morning to late evening, delegates were able to view as many caucuses and workshops as they wished over three evenings. Many caucuses and workshops were recorded to be viewed on the League Management section of the [lwv.org](#) website in the event we were unable to

log in to all in which we had an interest. We still had the opportunity to browse the Wares Market through a Virtual Wares Market to purchase League items offered by various State Leagues.

While it was a disappointment to be unable to go to Capitol Hill and meet with our Senators and Representative on the pre-Convention Lobby Day, Leaguers were still able to make their presence felt through a Virtual Lobby Day. On Thursday June 25, delegates and League members were asked to contact their Senators to urge passage of the Voting Rights Advancement Act. We called and emailed our Senators to urge support. As Senators Peters and Stabenow are among the sponsors of the bill, we had an easy task--thanking them. Also, Leaguers were asked to tweet between 2-3 p.m. on that day. Thus, hundreds of Leaguers were involved in advocacy that day.

Overall, I felt the Convention was well run and that the LWVUS staff did a remarkable job of organizing the virtual convention in about two months' time. All the business conducted over the two days is summarized in the [Convention 2020](#) section of the [lwv.org](#) League Management site under Daily Briefings. It was fun to view the 100-year anniversary congratulation messages from public figures and Congressional folks during the breaks. Hopefully, future conventions can include some of the virtual features to reduce barriers for those unable to attend due to distance or expense.

-- Paula Manley, LWVMI VP Membership

LWVMI DELEGATES RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS  
CONCERNING 2020 LWVUS CONVENTION

1. Did you watch the Thursday night pre-convention Zoom? Did you make it through the whole Friday and Saturday plenaries?

Yes (though a few couldn't watch the Thursday pre-convention webinar, everyone who responded said they listened to all of Friday and Saturday's plenaries.)

Yes, amazed that I did and amazed that I was interested until the last... of course was able to stand up and do my exercises :)

2. What was the BEST take-away from the convention or the workshops/ caucuses you attended?

Virginia Kase's speech was amazing-poignant and inspiring! The pre-convention panel with voting rights experts was superb!

Impressed with the organization of all of the work by the staff to make the virtual convention happen. Workshops and caucuses were impressive and efficiency of taking care of business.

The very capable, bright young women in leadership positions in League and our great new president.

The DEI Policy and bylaw adoption.

How well everything was organized

There are some really amazing women leaders in our League.

I am incredibly impressed by the talent, leadership and commitment of League Convention participants at all levels--LWVUS leaders and local League members who presented workshops.

That LWVUS is offering us some wonderful tools to help us do the work of League.  
Virginia's address

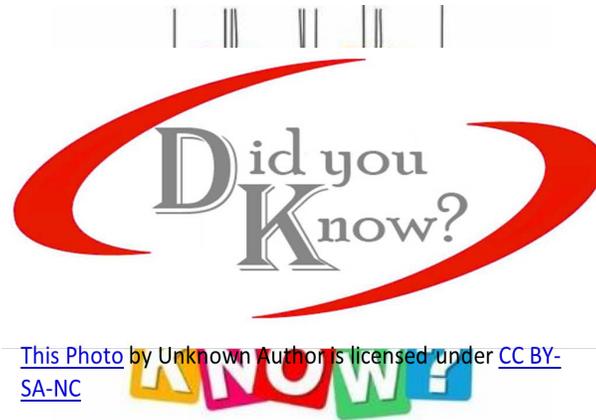
Takeaways: I took a number of notes out of the Q&A chat, actually, most interesting was that WA state can automatically register 16/17 year olds so they can vote as soon as they turn 18 and I was wondering if we can do that in MI (I don't think so); someone talked about the trust issue with absentee balloting in communities of color, citing where thousands of absentee ballots were stolen in NC; the need for a massive voter confidence campaign about absentee

## Delegates from local Leagues reflect on national convention

If you were a delegate to the LWVUS convention, you received a survey that Christina and I created. We were mostly concerned about whether the information provided to the delegates from LWVMI was appreciated and helpful (resounding "yes"! to both).

I compiled the responses in a digest form, and left in the respondents' colors/highlights to make it easier to read. **Click the image at left to read the PDF document.**

Since it is possible that we will have a virtual state convention next year, we will refer back to these responses when we are in planning mode.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

## Is your local League correct on the [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org) website?

Did you know that under **Find a Local League**, links to the websites all the local Leagues in Michigan, including Member at Large Units, and Geo Units in Michigan, are on the [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org) website? If a League doesn't have a website, the Facebook link is provided.

Additionally, the local League's leader is listed along with a link to that person's email. This allows quick access to someone who is visiting the state site (not just the public, but League members) and wants to easily and directly contact a local League.

If your local League's contact information is not correct, please contact Paula Bowman at [paulabowman9000@gmail.com](mailto:paulabowman9000@gmail.com) and we'll get it promptly updated.

-- Paula Bowman, LWVMI VP Program

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## Local League Spotlight: Holland Area

### LWV Holland Area Engaging with Local Clerk

The League of Women Voters-Holland Area has partnered with the Holland City Clerk to help stuff absentee ballots for mailing. Five league members worked seven hours over four days at the end of June to mail over 3000 absentee ballots.

As a result of our volunteer effort, the League's relationship with the Clerk has grown. In a recent conversation with the Clerk, the League learned that in preparation for the August 4 primary the returning poll workers had requested face shields in order to feel safe working the polls. This is something our League has the financial resources to provide.

We are finding that clerk engagement for us begins with building a

relationship with the clerk. Trust in meeting our commitments has been a key factor.

Currently the league and the Holland City Clerk are in discussion on how we can assist them with the general election. Poll workers and observers are always a possibility.

-- Claudia Berry, President LWV Holland Area

## Calendar



**August 4**  
Primary Election

**August 9**  
LWVMI Board meets

**September** Printed Voter Guides  
for November General Election

## Local Leagues

[Ann Arbor Area](#) (with the  
[Brighton Howell Geographical Unit](#))  
[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](#)  
[Jackson Area](#)  
[Kalamazoo Area](#) (with [Grand Rapids](#)  
[Geographical Unit](#), and [Calhoun County](#)  
[Geographical Unit](#))  
[Lansing Area](#)  
[Leelanau County](#) (with  
[Emmet/Charlevoix County Geographical](#)  
[Unit](#))  
[Macomb State \(MAL\) Unit](#)  
[Manistee County](#)  
[Marquette County](#)  
[Midland Area](#)  
(with [Bay County Geographical Unit](#))  
[Mt. Pleasant](#)  
[Northeast Michigan](#) (formerly [Alpena](#)  
[County](#))  
[Northwest Wayne County](#)  
[Oakland Area](#)  
[Saginaw County](#)  
[Tecumseh/Lenawee County](#) (MAL)  
[Troy](#)

For more information go  
to [www.lwvmi.org](http://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

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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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