



## League Links - May 2022

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## Co-Presidents' Messages

***PTV2022 Thank you, circulators! Keep up the good work!***

For links to the full flyer (front and back) [click here](#).

For the PTV2022 FAQ document, [click here](#).

-- Christina Schlitt, LWVMI Co-President



**Sign the Promote the Vote 2022 petition today to put a measure on the 2022 ballot that will:**

- Stop intimidation of voters and interference with voting
- Protect local election funding to keep elections secure
- Ensure we have 9 days of in-person, early voting
- Create a permanent absentee ballot list and online absentee ballot tracking
- Make lines shorter on Election Day
- Guarantee voters serving in the military have time to return their ballot

## Quiet May 3 Elections = Smooth Board of Canvassers Observing

Though 64 of Michigan's 83 counties had elections on May 3, only 4 communities held Special Elections for State Representatives. It was in those counties – Macomb, Kent, Wayne and Oakland – that the League launched its 2022 Board of Canvassers (BOC) observer program similar to the state-wide program following the presidential election in 2020.

The May 3rd elections were generally quiet. Our observer corps was made up of 14 League members and 3 other volunteers from our coalition partners. We were again lucky to secure the pro bono services of Attorney Mark Brewer who trained the observers about the duties of the BOC members and red flags we should watch for. As it turned out, most counties were so quiet that the BOC members and/or the Clerk were happy to discuss the process with the observers and answer any questions they had. In most cases the majority of the work was completed in the first day, and the BOC members breezed through the certification process with unanimous support.

Thank you to these League members who volunteered their time to help with the BOC observer process after the May 3rd election:

- Macomb County: Sylvia Cacossa, and Cathy Novak
- Oakland County: Maria Woloson, and Jim Treharne
- Kent County: Courtney Winnell, Carole Retan, Nancy Mroczkowski, Joan Long, Eva Sitek, Mark Weaver, and Stephanie Weaver
- Wayne County: Roberta Deering and Paula Bowman

And thank you also to Ingham County members Lisa Moore and Barb Babidigare who will be monitoring the State Board of Canvassers meeting on May 26.

The BoC project will be expanded in August to include up to 30 counties and even more in November. Because there will be elections in every

community and the ballots will be longer, the canvas process will also be longer. We will need more volunteers to help, so please consider being a part of this intriguing process in the days after August 2 and November 8. This is a great way to learn about what happens to the ballots after they're counted by the tabulator or by the AV counting board. Watching how everything must balance is another testament to how secure Michigan's elections are.

In League,

-- Paula Bowman, LWVMI Co-President

## Save The Date

All LWVMI delegates to the LWVUS Convention will meet via Zoom Wed., June 15, 4 p.m. More details to follow.



## Issues Facing MICRC

The Commission continues to meet the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month, from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Our League Monitoring Team continues to observe and report on the meetings.

Final maps took effect March 28, 2022. You can find your districts by entering your address into [VOTE411](#). You can also look up your districts by county at [www.Michigan.gov/MICRC](http://www.Michigan.gov/MICRC), [Final Maps](#).

There are four issues and two lawsuits currently facing the MICRC.

### Issues

The issues are: a Budget Shortfall, Future Membership of 2020 MICRC, House Resolution HJR S, and the MICRC's Final Report

#### Budget Shortfall

The MICRC sent a request to the state Legislature for funds to cover litigation expenses incurred in defending their maps. (The Michigan Constitution requires the Legislature to pay for litigation incurred by the MICRC in defending its maps.)

Commission Chair MC Rathhorn and Executive Director Edward Woods, III met with the House Appropriations Subcommittee to explain the request.

Due to the cost of litigation, the MICRC will run out of money in June unless the Legislature grants them the \$1 million plus, the MICRC has requested. A letter will be sent to the Committee asking them to place the requested funds for the MICRC in the Supplemental Budget as soon as possible.

### **Future Membership of 2020 MICRC**

The MICRC is waiting for their legal team to make a recommendation re the status of the 2020 Commission after the pending lawsuits have been settled. (There are two lawsuits pending in the federal courts.) The legal team reported that they are considering whether the Constitutional Amendment requires the MICRC to go “dormant” or “end” after the pending lawsuits have been settled. If the current MICRC were to “end,” a new set of Commissioners would have to be selected in the event new lawsuits were filed before the 2030 Commission was selected.

### **House Resolution HJR S Introduced**

House Resolution, HJR S, has been introduced into the House. It is non-binding, but if it passes with 2/3 vote of both the House and Senate, a proposal to abolish the MICRC from the Constitution would be on the November ballot.

### **MICRC’s Final Reports**

The Constitution requires a final report on the work of the Commission, including why the maps were drawn as they were. Commissioners who voted against the final maps may submit a dissenting report to be included with the final report, if they wish.

The release of the final report has been delayed because the MICRC’s lawyers are concerned that the content of one of the dissenting reports might have an adverse impact on pending or future lawsuits. The lawyers need to consult with one of the MICRC’s consultants, Dr. Lisa Handley. She has been tied up in other litigation and has not been available until recently.

The dissenting report will not be affected, but the MICRC report might need to provide context surrounding the issue.

## **Lawsuits**

### **Pending**

- Banerian v ICRC and Benson filed with the federal trial court. The case was heard by a 3-judge panel in the Western District of Michigan. It challenged the U.S. House map (Chestnut) for violating the one person, one vote requirement of the U.S. Constitution and it also claimed the Constitutional criterion re Communities of Interest was not followed correctly by the MICRC. In addition, the plaintiff asked for an injunction.

Voters Not Politicians was granted permission to be an Intervenor on the side of the MICRC.

On March 4, the Court:

Dismissed the Communities of Interest Claim under Rucho. (Rucho was the case used by the U.S. Supreme Court to dismiss the LWVMI v Benson 2018 lawsuit. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that partisan gerrymandering cases could not be heard by the federal courts because it is a state issue.)  
Denied the request for an injunction.

The one person, one vote claim remained. Oral arguments on that claim were heard on March 16. On March 25, the Federal Court denied the plaintiff's claim.

The plaintiff appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. No action will be taken by the U.S. Supreme Court until at least October.

- Agee et al v. Benson filed in Western District Federal Court, claims MICRC violated Voting Rights Act when it drew state House and Senate maps in South Eastern Michigan. Briefs have been requested.

### **Dismissed, Denied or Settled Lawsuits**

- Detroit Caucus v MICRC re VRA in all 3 types of maps  
Dismissed by Michigan Supreme Court, 4 to 3 on February 3, 2022.

- LWVMI v MICRC filed with the Michigan Supreme Court on January 28, 2022. The lawsuit challenged the partisan fairness of the state House map (Hickory). On February 10, the Secretary of State filed an Amicus Brief requesting the Court to expedite the process and to adjust the Candidate filing deadlines, if necessary. The SOS did not support either side of the lawsuit.

Dismissed by Michigan Supreme Court, 5 to 2 on March 25, 2022.

- Wagner v MICRC filed by Commissioner Erin Wagner, alleging the MICRC had violated the Freedom of Information Act.  
Settled by a Consent Judgment.

Susan Smith, VP for Advocacy and Redistricting Director

## **Advocacy**

On May 9, the League of Women Voters of Michigan, represented by Judy Karandjeff, participated in a press conference sponsored by a Statewide Coalition to call on the legislature to put Transparency and Term Limits on the Ballot

Michigan is one of only two states in the nation that does not require their statewide officials to file a financial disclosure. It is one of the reasons why Michigan consistently ranks last for transparency in government. This proposal would bring Michigan in line with the 48 states and Congress that currently require disclosure.

It also updates Michigan's 30-year-old term limits law by reducing the time legislators can serve in the legislature from 14 years to 12, with the option of serving all 12 in one chamber.

The growing coalition of supporters includes:

- AFT Michigan
- Michigan Chamber of Commerce
- League of Women Voters of Michigan
- Michigan Manufacturers' Association
- Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights
- NFIB Michigan
- Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Michigan Association for Justice
- Michigan Bankers Association
- Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Fems for Dems
- Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association
- Michigan REALTORS
- UNITE HERE Local 24

On Tuesday, May 10, the Michigan House and Senate passed HJR R with the needed 2/3rds vote to place the financial disclosure and term limit change on the November ballot. The League supports this proposal.

While LWVUS has a position opposing term limits at the federal level, the position (under Representative Government) allows state leagues to make the decision on whether or not to use the position. LWV of California supported the term limit change adopted by voters in California in 2012. No state has been successful to eliminate term limits completely, but some have successfully made modifications. LWVMI will be working to pass this ballot proposal in November because we believe the changes will make Michigan's government better.

-- Judy Karandjeff, LWVMI Chair Advocacy Committee

## **The MI Vote Matters HS Registration Challenge**

We're entering the home stretch with the challenge. Many schools are conducting their final voter registration activities this month. Information from [Inspire2Vote](#) indicates that many schools have submitted pledge cards and they expect more to arrive by the May 27 deadline.

There are currently over 80 schools participating in the Challenge. I'm very impressed with the participation of our local Leagues in this project. Final numbers will be reported in next month's League Links.

On April 18, I attended a virtual meeting with Ben Gardner, All Voting is Local, Dessa Cosma, Detroit Disability Power (DDP) and Cathy McAdam, LWVGP and DDP to review the challenges faced by voters with disabilities

at the polls. There are three main issues: 1. Training of poll workers, 2. cultural competency, and 3. accessibility.

The following are suggestions to be included in poll worker training:

- a. How to understand, appreciate and interact with voters with disabilities
- b. Communicate the laws pertinent to voters with disabilities (i.e. they are allowed to bring someone to assist them with voting)
- c. Hands on training on the use of the Voter Assist Terminals (VAT's)
- d. Rights of voters with disabilities (related to item b above)

We will be working with local clerks to see if these items can be incorporated into poll worker training. The Secretary of State's Strategic Plan identifies serving voters with disabilities as a priority

The next Voter Services Virtual Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 26, at 7:00 p.m. The agenda, with Zoom link, will be sent out the day before the meeting.

Judy Florian, LWVMI VP of Voter Services, [jflo@comcast.net](mailto:jflo@comcast.net)



## **LWVMI Spring Workshop: Available Resources**

If you missed the April 30 Spring Workshop or would like to refresh your memory, resources from the workshop are available.

The workshop featured a general session on ballot proposals with much information on Promote the Vote 2022. Breakout sessions highlighted local advocacy, local action on climate change, using information from a local observer corps, and getting a pro-voting resolution passed.

To see available materials and recordings of those sessions from the workshop, please use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/53arejrn>

-- Denise Hartsough, Chair Spring Workshop Committee

## **Membership Updates**

The Membership Leaders' Network met on Wednesday, May 11, at 7 p.m. on Zoom. The topic was *Implementing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Lens in Local Leagues*.

Three Leagues that have successfully implemented DEI into the League's culture shared their experiences. Wilhelmina Giblin represented Grosse

Pointe and MerriKay Oleen-Burkey represented Kalamazoo. The DEI Team decided that hearing about DEI implementation from a League in another state might provide some new perspectives, so our Shur Fellow, Linda Mahan, connected us with Pam Turner and Vonne Zdenek from LWV Larimer County, Colorado.

The May Network Zoom meeting was the last regularly scheduled meeting until September, unless a topic emerges that needs immediate attention. In the meantime, the plan is to have smaller Zoom meetings for Leagues with similar situations such as size, location, status or challenges. Membership leaders will be contacted as meeting are organized.

If you have questions or would like to be added to the Membership Leaders' Network email list to receive information about meetings and resources, contact Camilla.

-- Camilla Davis, LWVMI VP Membership [cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com](mailto:cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com)

## Local League Spotlights

**LWV Detroit** Rebeka Islam, LWVMI Membership Director, (photo at right) is being recognized for her efforts as one of ten people chosen for the 2021 Governor's Service Awards. She and the other recipients, chosen by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Community Service Commission, have dedicated their time to help support significant needs in food distribution, health and other community issues during the pandemic. The *Macomb Daily* published an article about Rebekah and her accomplishments on April 28, 2022. [Read the article](#)



**LWV Saginaw** Kimberly Napoleon will be the Grand Marshall of the Saginaw Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 30.

**LWV Lansing Area** The May 10 Annual Meeting featured Antoniese (Tony) Gant, Policy Analyst and Mid-Michigan Regional Coordinator for Nation Outside, an organization that advocates for people who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Learn more about Nation Outside on their website. <https://www.nationoutside.org/>

**Be sure to check out the most recent [LWVMI Annual Report!](#)**





Does YOUR local League put together an annual report of your League's accomplishments?

These reports are a great way to highlight all your League has accomplished, and a way for new members to learn what LWV is all about.

## Local Leagues

- Berrien/Cass Counties
- Copper Country
- Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
- Delta County
- Detroit
- Eastern UP MAL State Unit
- Flint Area
- Grand Haven Area
- Greater Grand Rapids Area MAL State Unit
- Grand Traverse Area (with Crawford County Geographical Unit)
- Grosse Pointe
- Holland Area
- Jackson Area
- Kalamazoo Area (with Calhoun County Geographical Unit)
- Lansing Area
- Leelanau County
- Livingston County MAL State Unit
- Macomb County MAL State Unit
- Manistee County
- Marquette County
- Midland Area (with Bay County Geographical Unit)
- Mt. Pleasant
- Northern Lower Michigan MAL State Unit
- Northeast Michigan (formerly Alpena County)
- Northwest Wayne County
- Oakland Area
- Saginaw County
- Tecumseh/Lenawee County MAL State Unit
- Troy
- Washtenaw County (formerly Ann Arbor Area)

For more information go to [www.lwvmi.org](http://www.lwvmi.org) or check out Facebook pages for state and local LWVs

## League Leadership 2021-2023

### Officers

Co-President: Christina Schlitt (Grand Traverse Area)

Co-President: Paula Bowman (NW Wayne County)

VP Voter Services: Judy Florian (Grosse Pointe)

VP Advocacy: Sue Smith (Washtenaw County)

VP Membership: Camilla Davis (Lansing Area)

VP Program: Maria Woloson (Oakland Area)

Secretary: Carla Barrows-Wiggins (Oakland Area)

Treasurer: Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo Area)

### Directors

Voter Services: Carolyn Vertin (Tecumseh/Lenawee)

Voter Services: Anna Scott (Lansing Area)

Membership: Connie Mitchell (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)

Membership: Rebeka Islam (Detroit)

Communications: Vicki Granger (Grosse Pointe)

At-Large: David Allen (Marquette County)

At-Large: Kathy Poore (Macomb MAL)

## Calendar

### May 2022

May 25: Observer Corps Zoom call, 3 p.m.

May 26: Voter Services Zoom call, 7 p.m.

May 30: Memorial Day - office closed



### June 2022

June 11: LWVMI Board Meeting

June 15: LWVMI delegates to LWVUS convention Zoom call, 4 p.m.

June 23-26: LWVUS [Convention](#)

View the [calendar](#) on the LWVMI website

**Connect with us!** League of Women Voters of Michigan

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