

## League Links - February 2023

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### IT'S STATE CONVENTION TIME!

May 19 - 21, 2023



We're ready to welcome you to the 2023 LWVMI Convention at the **Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center** in East Lansing. We will conduct the business of the League in 3 plenary sessions, but there will be workshops, shared meals, networking opportunities, a silent auction fundraiser for the LWVMI, and wonderful opportunities to meet with League members from all over the state who share the same values.

Any League member can attend convention. Before you register, confer with your local League president to find out if you can be a voting delegate from your League. The number of delegates per League are determined by the number of members in that League.

The **convention registration fee is \$200** for all attendees. This fee covers your admittance to all the convention venues, materials, workshops, plenaries, 3 meals on Saturday including the Awards Banquet and Sunday breakfast. You can register and pay the fee on-line (preferred) but you can also copy the registration form and send it in with a check if necessary. Registration deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>—after that, a \$25 late fee will be imposed. Here is the link to the registration form. <https://fs16.formsite.com/lwvmi/convention19/index>

The Kellogg Center is holding **rooms for our group at a discounted rate** but reservations must be made by April 19. After that, you may still be able to get a room, but the discounted rate may be gone. To make a hotel reservation, call **Kellogg at 800-875-5090. Use the code: 2305 LEAGUE to get the discount.**

At every convention, we **celebrate League achievements**. At our Saturday night banquet (to be held in the concourse of Munn Ice Arena), we will present 3 awards: [The Belle Brotherton Award](#), [the Judy Karandjeff Advocacy Award](#) and the [Eva Packard Voter Service Award](#). Read all about these awards and how you can nominate someone [here](#).

Nominations are due by April 15. During the convention, we will also be recognizing “Belle Ringer” awardees – people from each League who deserve special appreciation for the routine tasks of the League. A description of these non-competitive awards is included in the Awards Packet.

A **silent auction** has always been a fun part of our conventions. We hope every local League can donate at least one item to the auction. This auction information [form](#) will give you more details. Does your League have items to sell at convention? If you need table space, please contact [Kathy Poore](#) we can set aside some room for you.

We are planning **6 great workshops** for Saturday afternoon in 2 different time slots. Each member can choose a workshop in each time slot. See the registration form for details. The workshops are:

- **Gun Safety**
- **New Leaders Boot Camp**
- **LWV Engagement in Minority Communities**
- **National Popular Vote**
- **Creating a LWV Campus Unit**
- **Censorship, Including Black History**

There are other convention events that will make this a fun, educational weekend. Learn about them in the registration form, but watch for more details later. A lot of the information about the convention will be on the Members section of our website (under Miscellaneous Member Resources).

**Remember these important dates:**

Feb. 19 – Proposed amendments to Bylaws due to Sue Smith  
(susanprakkensmith@comcast.net)

March 1 – Program Planning reports from local Leagues due to Maria Woloson (mywoloson@gmail.com)

April 15 – Award nominations are due

April 19 – Hotel reservations must be made to receive group rate

April 30 – Convention registrations due to avoid late fee

## Proposal 2022-2 Update



Melanie Macie, an attorney from **Promote the Vote (PTV)**, spoke to the local League Presidents/Unit Leaders at the network meeting Thursday, 16 February.

As one of the attorneys working on legislation, she noted that **PTV** has been asked by the **MISOS** to assist in drafting legislation to assure the implementation of Prop-2. Currently they are focusing on the Early Voting component of Prop-2 as it is the most in-depth piece of the amendment. A draft bill is in the works to present to the legislature. They continue to work on drafting legislation for the other key components of Proposal 2022-2. (As PTV continues to work on implementing Prop 2, many others are working to enhance plans for election protection this year in preparation for the busy 2024 election year.)

The following is **excerpted from an update on the implementation of Prop-2** from the Bureau of Elections. and shared by the Michigan Department of State (MDOS):

The **Bureau of Elections** has begun the implementation of some aspects of Proposal 2022-2 and the preparation and planning for others for upcoming elections. At this time, the **Michigan Legislature** has not yet enacted legislation that likely will provide additional implementation details for early in-person voting; the permanent absent voter ballot list (permanent ballot list); state-funded absent voter ballot drop boxes; state-funded return postage on AV applications and AV ballots; and other elements of Proposal 2022-2.

Technical implementation of these proposals is a months-long process, and the major elements of Proposal 2022-2 are not ready for full implementation for jurisdictions holding elections on May 2, 2023.

A status update on the major elements, **Early Voting, Prepaid Postage, Ballot Drop Boxes, Permanent Absent Voter Ballot List**, and Bureau guidance for jurisdictions holding elections on May 2, 2023, can be found here: [To read more](#)

Christina Schlitt  
LWVMI Co-President

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## Voter Services



### Vote411

I am pleased to announce that LWVMI has paid the cost of the Vote411 subscription for all local Leagues for the 2023 year. In addition, Carolyn Vertin, Vote411 Director, has created the following Gmail account for use by all VOTE411 directors going forward ([vote411ofmi@gmail.com](mailto:vote411ofmi@gmail.com)). The email will be transferable to future directors' use and at their discretion, allow access to

others when needed. The password can be changed when appropriate. In this new Gmail account, a shared drive will contain the following information that will be available to all VOTE411 administrators and provide useful Vote411 election resources:

- Calendar of dates
- Sample questions
- Sample templates for use in the system
- Master list of administrators
- Training links

Questions regarding this new shared drive can be directed to Anna Scott ([anna.m.scott@gmail.com](mailto:anna.m.scott@gmail.com)) and Carolyn Vertin ([cdvertin1@gmail.com](mailto:cdvertin1@gmail.com)), our Vote411 Directors.

### **MI Vote Matters High School Registration Challenge**

Sara Weertz, Project Manager, will be the LWVMI point person for this year's MI Vote Matters High School Voter Registration Challenge. Schools continue to sign up. Sara has sent emails to those local Leagues with schools within their area. Questions can be directed to Sara at [saraweertz.LWVMI@gmail.com](mailto:saraweertz.LWVMI@gmail.com).

The deadline for applications for Team Captains was February 10. At the request of the Secretary of State's Office, Paula, Sara and I reviewed several applications for these positions. Final selection will be made by the Secretary of State's Office. The Team Captains will then attend leadership training conducted by Inspire2Vote.

The next Voter Services virtual team meeting will be held on Thursday, **February 23, 7:00 p.m.** Our guest speaker will be Shira Roza, Election Protection Director for **Promote the Vote**. Shira will provide an update on the Proposal 2 implementation. The Zoom link will be sent to team members the day before the meeting. As always, the meeting will be recorded for those who cannot attend.

- Judy FlorianVP, LWVMI Voter Services  
[Jflo@comcast.net](mailto:Jflo@comcast.net)

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## **Advocacy**

The **Governor and Legislature** are off to a strong start. Committees are meeting, agendas are being set, and bills are being introduced and passed. On January 25, Governor Gretchen Whitmer addressed the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate. The text of the State of the State is available here.  
[2023 State of the State \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov)



Highlights of the agenda presented in the **State of the State** are:

- Universal Pre-School free for all 4-year-olds.
- Firearm Regulation – enact red flag and universal background laws
- Tax Relief - Expand Earned Income Tax Credit and pension tax relief
- Expand Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to cover sexual orientation and gender identity

- K-12 student help with tutors and after-school programs
- Expand free tuition program for free community college or skills training schools to those 21 years of age or older
- Remove abortion and marriage bans

During the week of January 30, the **Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson** presented her agenda to the House Elections Committee and the Senate Elections and Ethics Committee.

She noted these **issues needed to be addressed**:

- Implement Proposal 2
- Align current laws with Constitutional amendments
- Put clerks in position to succeed
- Fully fund elections

The **LWVMI Advocacy Committee** met and made recommendations to the LWVMI Board of Directors regarding our priorities, legislative interview questions, and bills to support. The following bills were supported by the LWVMI Board of Directors.

1. Support SB 3 and HB 4001 to expand the earned income tax
2. Support SB 4 and HB 4003 to add protection of sexual orientation and gender identity to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.
3. Support HB 4006 to repeal PA 328 of 1931 that prohibits abortions.
4. Support SB 33 to provide the population count for prisoners in correctional facilities be based on their home address.

On February 9, the Senate Committee on Civil Rights, Judiciary and Public Safety passed SB 4 for amend the **Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act** to add sexual orientation and gender identity. The bill will now go to the full Senate for a vote.

LWVMI has sent out an **action alert**. If you did not receive it, please go to LWVMI's webpage and take action now! Click the gold "Take Action" button in the upper right hand corner.

HB 4001 has changed during the process, and it now contains the expansion of the **Earned Income Tax**, pension relief and a taxpayer rebate of \$180. The conference report has been passed by the House and the Senate. The House gave it immediate effect and the Senate postponed the vote.

On February 16, some Senate Democrats introduced bills to require **safe storage of firearms, implement red flag laws, and background checks** SB 76-86. The bills were assigned to Senate Committee on Civil Rights, Judiciary and Public Safety. The LWVMI Advocacy Committee voted to support the bills and sent them to the Board for approval.

There is a paper highlighting the results of the **2022 election** in Michigan available on our website, [www.lwvmi.org](http://www.lwvmi.org). It can be found in the Voting Rights section of "Our Work" or at <https://lwvmi.org/voting-rights>.

On March 22, the **LWVMI Advocacy Committee** will host a meeting to update anyone interested on the legislative process and our priorities. More information will be sent closer to the date.

## National Popular ote!

### LWVMI Supports National Popular Vote Compact

#### LWVMI Board Action

On December 10, 2022, the LWVMI Board took the following action:

1. Approved signing on to a letter to state legislators indicating LWVMI support of the National Popular Vote
2. Approved joining the Coalition in support of the NPV legislative campaign. Susan Smith, Advocacy VP, will represent LWVMI in the Coalition.

#### Opportunities for Local League Action

Local Leagues and Units are an important part of the Legislative Campaign to pass the National Popular Vote bill which will be introduced in the Michigan Legislature in February.

It's important to educate League members and the public about the NPV and why the League is supporting it.

Local Leagues and Units are scheduling their **Town Halls and Virtual Webinars for March and April**. Materials have been sent to local League Presidents and Unit Leaders. Presenter training sessions will be held the week of February 20.

For more information on your **League's or Unit's participation in the Legislative Campaign**, please contact your local League President or Unit Leader.

Susan Smith, VP for Advocacy

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## MICRC

#### Meetings

The MICRC meets virtually the third Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be March 16 at 10 am. Members of our League Monitoring Team continue to observe and report on the meetings.



#### MICRC Funding

The Legislature has authorized a \$3.5 million payment to the MICRC for FY 2023. The Governor signed the bill and the money has been deposited in MICRC's account.

The Commission approved the voluntary dismissal of the lawsuit they had filed against the previous Legislature in the fall of 2022 for failing to provide the Commission with the funds as required by the Michigan Constitution.

### **Update on Lawsuit: Agee et al v. Benson**

Agee et al v. Benson et al filed in Western District Federal Court, claims MICRC violated VRA when it drew state House and Senate maps in SE Michigan. Oral arguments will be heard July 12, 2023. Whether or not the case will go to trial will be determined by the Court after the oral arguments are heard. Justice Maloney, who is handling the current process, has asked the Secretary of State for deadlines related to the 2024 election.

Depositions are being taken. Commissioners as well as current and former staff are meeting with MICRC attorneys.

A U.S. Supreme Court decision on Alabama Redistricting Case, which claims that Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional, could impact the Agee lawsuit. That decision is expected after the first of the year.

### **Moore v Harper, North Carolina Redistricting Case**

This case, which is before the U.S. Supreme Court, is based on the “Independent State Legislature Theory”, which states only state legislatures have the authority to draw up rules regarding federal elections, including drawing the lines for Congressional Districts. State courts and Governors have no role in the process.

Oral arguments were heard on December 7, 2022. A decision by SCOTUS is expected in June 2023.

LWVMI joined the LWVUS Amicus Brief in opposition to the Independent State Legislature Theory.

-Susan Smith, VP Advocacy

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## **Membership and Leadership Development**



### **MEMBERSHIP LEADERS' NETWORK**

The Membership Leaders' Network met on Zoom on Wednesday, February 8. The topic was Keeping Your League Visible in 2023 – Creating a Signature Project. After a short PowerPoint presentation of suggestions for creating a project, participants shared what their Leagues are doing and exchanged How To information. The next MLN meeting will be Wednesday, March 8. The proposed topic will focus on DEI, but this is dependent on the availability of a presenter. If a presenter is not available in March, the topic will be shifted to April. All League members are welcome to attend Network

meetings. If you'd like to be added to the list, contact  
Camilla. [cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com](mailto:cdavis.lwvmi@gmail.com)

## LWVMI MEMBERSHIP COUNT

The preliminary count of LWVMI's total membership as of January 31, 2023 (per LWVUS) is 2734. The count as of January 31, 2022 was 2542.

## SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL LEAGUES

**Grand Traverse Area** in partnership with the Traverse Area District Library (TADL) and Traverse Area Community Media (TACM), will present a program on Tuesday, February 21 at 12 noon that will focus the powers and responsibilities of local government in Michigan. The program can be accessed in several ways: In person at the Traverse Area District Library, 610 Woodmere, Traverse City; the LWVGTA Facebook page- <https://www.facebook.com/lwvgta>; TADL YouTube- [youtube.com/@TADLnotjustbooks](https://www.youtube.com/@TADLnotjustbooks); or Community TV Channel 189 with Spectrum TV in northwest lower Michigan.

**Dearborn/Dearborn Heights** is hosting a *Meet Your Elected Officials* event on Tuesday, February 28, 4- 6 pm. Officials serving residents in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights have been invited to attend and meet constituents. Each elected official will be asked to take five minutes to introduce themselves and contact information. Members, guests, and the public are invited to attend.

**Livingston County** members learned about the poverty in their county during a January 17 program that focused on the working poor. The ALICE program highlighted the financial struggles that some county residents deal with daily. ALICE stands for Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed. The program is available on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKZa4pNiFZ4&t=4s>

-Camilla Davis, Membership VP



## TIME IS RUNNING OUT !!!

**Program Planning** Reports are due  
**March 1, 2023.**

**Decision 2023** We need the reports to decide whether to:  
(1) keep LWVMI existing positions as is; (2) update them; or (3) identify additional topics to be studied.

Hopefully all local Leagues have already met to discuss LWVMI existing positions and other topics. Do you need the materials to make your reports?

### Where to find existing positions:

LWVMI positions may be found at <https://lwvmi.org/lwvmi-positions/>.



LWVUS existing positions are available in *Impact on Issues* section at <https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>.

For Program Planning Report forms and materials sent previously, go to our website, [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org), in the Members section.

**Good work** to those Leagues who already sent in their forms! Questions? Please call/text me at (248)703-6236 or email me at [mywoloson@gmail.com](mailto:mywoloson@gmail.com).

Maria Woloson, LWVMI Program Planning

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## Observer Corps

The next statewide Zoom meeting for Observer Corps will be **March 29, 2023** at 3:00 pm. David Allen will send the link a few days in advance of the meeting. The guest speaker will be ... David Allen! He will discuss next steps for the statewide Zoom meetings. As usual, local Leagues will have an opportunity to provide updates to the whole group.

-David Allen

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## LWVMI Communications Committee

**Statewide Tech Sharing Group is Being Formed**



LWVMI Communications Committee

Over the last several years, the LWVMI has increased our use of technology and will likely be continuing its use for the convenience of our members and the community. Many members have become proficient at creating videos in CANVA, developing run of shows for webinars, running webinars, recording candidate forums, editing videos and posting on social media.

The LWVMI Communications Committee has determined it will be beneficial for members who are experienced, or interested in becoming experienced, to meet occasionally to exchange ideas and share their expertise. Donna Mullins will be the convener for these share sessions. Interested members should contact Donna at [mullinsdj@outlook.com](mailto:mullinsdj@outlook.com).

LWVMI might occasionally call on members to assist with statewide webinars. The more people we have on our roster, the easier it will be to choose times that are convenient to you. Here's an opportunity to put your skills to use and have fun in the process!

### Twitter & Instagram Experts Needed

The LWVMI Communications Committee has two openings. We need someone to manage our Twitter account and someone else to manage our Instagram account. The time necessary to manage either of these platforms is flexible and should be minimal.

## Local League Communications Network

Twenty-two League members from across Michigan will be meeting for the first time on Monday, February 20th at noon for an introductory meeting. The hope is to get local League communicators together to share their expertise and to learn what the LWVMI Communications Committee can do to help them with their messaging. We plan to share information via email as well as occasional Zoom meetings. Please contact Kathy Poore, [kpoores@wowway.com](mailto:kpoores@wowway.com), if you have someone in your League who should be a part of this network.

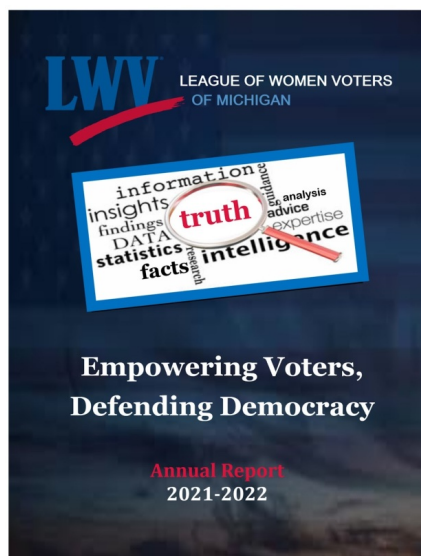
### MIS & DIS-Information

Communications Committee members are keeping an eye on MIS and DIS information circulating in the country. Bad actors continue to spread falsehoods on many aspects of society and the League has access to credible groups who are monitoring it.

For example, there are extremist groups who are trying to use CRT, book banning, discrimination against LGBTQ, and all sorts of intimidation against others to sway voters to their way of thinking.

Your Communications Committee is following these events and will keep you posted when there is an action you can take to help. Recently, the LWVMI sent all Michigan League members an email to take action regarding amendments to the **Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (ELCRA)** to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression. (See Advocacy section of this issue)

- Kathy Poore, LWVMI Communications Chair



Be sure to read our 2021-2022 LWVMI Annual Report!

Just click on the picture at left.

This document is also on the LWVMI website under [Members, Miscellaneous League Resources](#).

## Local Leagues

Berrien/Cass Counties

Copper Country ([with Gogebic Geographical Unit](#))

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  
Macomb County MAL State Unit  
Manistee County  
Marquette County  
Midland Area  
Mt. Pleasant  
Northeast Michigan (formerly Alpena County)  
Northern Lower Michigan  
Northwest Wayne County  
Oakland Area  
Saginaw County  
Tecumseh/Lenawee County MAL State Unit  
Troy  
Washtenaw County

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

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### **LWVMI Leadership 2021-2023**

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)  
Communications Chair: Kathy Poore (Macomb MAL)

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**Calendar**

Feb 20 - Communications Network Call  
Feb 23 - Voter Service Network Call  
March - Women's History Month  
March 1 - Program Planning Reports due  
March 11 - State Board Meeting  
March 12-18 - Sunshine Week  
March 16 - Local League/Units Presidents Call  
March 22 - Advocacy Update call



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

**Phone:** 517-484-5383

**Email:** [office@lwvmi.org](mailto:office@lwvmi.org)

**Website:** [lwvmi.org](http://lwvmi.org)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmichigan/>

**Instagram:** [#lwvmich](https://www.instagram.com/lwvmich)

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/LWVMichigan>