

League Links - July 2023

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2023 LWVUS Council

From June 22-25 in Las Vegas, your LWVMI Co-Presidents and VP for Voter Services Judy Florian joined LWV leaders from nearly all 50 states, as well as LWVUS board and staff members, for the LWVUS Council meeting. Compared to a LWVUS convention where attendance is over 500, there were only about 150 members and staff at Council.



Council focused on a) the new unified dues/membership model, one component of the LWV Transformation, and on b) the "Moonshot Goal" announced at the 2022 Convention--to abolish the Electoral College. And we also enjoyed networking and sharing information with leaders from other states!

Dues Model

Beginning in 2025, everyone will join or renew membership in LWV at the same registration page. All League websites and materials will take people to that same page for membership.

Recommended dues will be \$75 for an individual. People may choose to pay as little as \$20 and will be invited to pay \$150, \$250 or more. Even students must pay at least \$20. As now, household dues will be one and a half times individual dues (\$112.50 recommended; \$30 minimum). It appears that

members will renew as of their joining date, whenever that falls.

Local Leagues will receive information about members who have joined and about those who have not renewed, so they can follow up with the lapsed members.

Dues, minus processing cost, will be shared upon processing: 33% National, 47% State, 20% Local. This compares with the current split of the \$64 average dues paid in Michigan: 50% National, 36% State, 14% Local.

LWVUS projects that the new structure and distribution of funds will create small or moderate losses for only a few state and local Leagues. For the first 2 years, LWVUS promises to make up any lost income to state and local Leagues.

Factored into the projections are calculations that 80% of individual members will pay \$75, and that membership will grow at a rate of 5-8% over the next 5 years.

Though the new dues structure won't start until 2025, here are some suggestions from your Co-Presidents for local Leagues to prepare now:

- Start encouraging members now to donate to your League separately from paying dues.
- Plan how to manage finances with dues coming in over the course of the year, rather than during a short period.
- Keep in mind that this change is intended to strengthen LWV--and that we will all learn how to navigate the new system.

Abolishing the Electoral College

The LWV Transformation, including the new dues model and, hopefully, increased membership, will position LWV to carry out a multi-phase "moonshot" plan to abolish the Electoral College:

1. Adopt the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact in enough states to make it work.
2. Gauge the public response to 1 person, 1 vote.
3. Explore frameworks for change.
4. Announce frameworks – a world without the electoral college.
5. Formalize plans for the abolition of the electoral college.

Each phase is expected to take a decade. We were reminded that passage of the 19th Amendment took nearly 100 years.

We are in Phase 1. Seventeen states have already passed the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact: CA, CO, CT, DE, DC, HI, IL, MD, MA, MN, NJ, NM, NY, OR, RI, VT, WA. Their electoral college votes total 205 of the 270 needed for a majority and to trigger activation of the compact.

Eight states, including Michigan, are working on it: AR, AZ, ME, MI, NC, NV, OK, VA. 65 more electoral college votes are needed—and we can supply 15. Please watch for LWVMI Action Alerts and TAKE ACTION to support passage of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact!

We find this ambitious effort galvanizing. We hope that it also inspires you and will attract more people to join and work within the League to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy!

Paula Bowman and Denise Hartsough
LWVMI Co-Presidents

Voter Service Updates

Candidate Forum Guide

I'm pleased to announce the completion of our first ever Candidate Forum Guide! A core team of individuals has been working on this publication since February. The purpose of the Guide is to provide local Leagues with best practices for conducting candidate forums. We've also included many exhibits that should be helpful in the planning process. The Guide is available at lwvmi.org on a password-protected page-**LWV Only**. You can access by going to the dropdown **Members** menu, then select **LWV Only**; a password is required to access. The password will be sent to all local League presidents and voter service leaders. Please do not share this password with non-League members!

This Guide was a collaborative effort from several local League members. The core team members included Betsy Cushman, Dearborn/Dearborn Heights, Ellen Lafferty, Livingston County, Donna Mullins, Lansing Area and Joanne Winkelman, Lansing Area.

This team did a superb job of designing, editing and providing sample information from various League resources, both local and national. In addition, we received proofreading assistance and editorial comments from Rhonda Craig, Detroit, Lynne Kochmanski, Washtenaw County and Tina Pawlak, Holland Area. A special thanks to all of these League members for their incredible work-it does indeed take a village! We hope this Guide is helpful to you!

*Thank you
Candidate Forum
Experts!*

Also included in the **LWV Only** section is a set of sample questions to pose to candidates in various local and state races.

Proposal 22-2 Training Materials

LWVMI is working with Promote the Vote to finalize materials for Proposal 22-2 training. These materials will be available to local Leagues to conduct Town Hall meetings in the fall. Pass through grants will be available to assist with costs incurred by local Leagues. We feel strongly that educating our communities on the many election changes is critical for both the 2023 and 2024 elections. Stay tuned for more information!

Presentation for Special Populations

As mentioned in the last League Links, one of our voter services goals for 2023-24 is to provide voting information to the following special populations: newly Naturalized citizens, citizens with disabilities, current and previously incarcerated citizens and citizens who are homeless. If your League serves any of these populations and would like a copy of the presentation and script,

please let me know. As promised in the last League Links issue, I am sharing additional slides from the Power Point presentation.



VOTING IN MICHIGAN

We answer these questions in the next slides.

- * Who is Eligible to Vote in Michigan ?
- * What are the Ways to Register in Michigan?
- * How Do I Register?
- * How Do I Learn About National, State & Local Election Issues and Candidates?

Slide #24 Vote411.org



Citizens with Disabilities Have the Right to Vote

- You may request an absentee ballot from your city or township clerk.
- Voters who are blind or visually impaired can apply [online](#) for an accessible electronic absentee ballot.
- Accessible voting machines are available at all polling places.
- You can go to the [Michigan Secretary of State website \(michigan.gov/vote\)](#) for all the information and resources you need about accessibility and/or using an absentee ballot to Vote by Mail.



Are you a voter with a disability?

You have the right to vote privately and independently or to get help casting your ballot.

MICHIGANVOTING.ORG/KNOW-YOUR-RIGHTS

Voting in Michigan is Now Easy & Convenient!



The next virtual Voter Services Network meeting will be held on Thursday, August 24, 7:00 p.m. As always, I will send the Zoom link out on August 23. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. For those who have local elections on August 8th, I hope all goes well!

Judy Florian
Vice President Voter Services
jflo@comcast.net

Advocacy Update: Bills and Budget

The Legislature wrapped up the budget and passed the 8 election bills implementing the PTV2022 ballot proposal. The legislature is scheduled to return the weeks of July 17 and August 21, and return to their regular schedule September 5th.

ELECTIONS: These election bills are on the way to the Governor for her signature. The bills will take effect 90 days after the end of the legislative session.

- SB 339 - launch enhanced tracking system for absentee ballots and applications
- SB 367 - provide at least nine-days of early voting and permit pre-processing and the early tabulation of absentee ballots eight days before election in certain circumstances.
- SB 370 - establish signature matching and curing process and prepaid postage for absentee ballots and applications.
- SB 373 - expand the types of identification that can be used for voter identification purposes.
- HB 4696 - establish penalties for disclosing early voting results.
- HB 4697 - require drop boxes for every 15,000 voters, one accessible drop box and video monitoring for certain drop boxes.
- HB 4699 - establish permanent mail ballot list, which allows voters to sign one application to receive an absentee ballot for every future election.
- HB 4702 - allow for an increase in the size of Election Day precincts to 5,000 from 2,999 active registered voters.
- Already passed PA 25 of 2023 that allows 6 days after election to tabulate overseas ballots and electronic voting for military members. And PA 2 of 2023 moving the presidential primary to February 27, 2024.

In addition, the budget bill, HB 4437, that was passed by the MI House and Senate and given immediate effect allocates money to help implement Promote the Vote 2022:

- One-Time Supplemental: \$11.5M – This money is a one-time implementation cost for Prop 1 and Prop 2, which includes early voting, drop boxes, prepaid postage, ballot tracking, permanent mail ballot list, personal finance disclosure
- One-Time Appropriation: \$27.2 M – This money is a one-time implementation cost for Prop 1 and Prop 2, which includes early voting, drop boxes, prepaid postage, ballot tracking, permanent mail ballot list, personal finance disclosure.
- On-going new Appropriation: \$18.8M – This includes 20 new full-time employees and on-going costs related to early voting, prepaid postage, drop box replacement, drop box video monitoring, and other Prop 2 and Prop 1 needs.
- Together, this \$46M for the upcoming fiscal year is state restricted revenue from the newly created Election Administration Support Fund in the Department of the Treasury. Of this \$46M, up to \$30M “shall be expended for incentive grants to counties to coordinate the implementation of early voting by local governments within their jurisdiction in the most efficient manner possible.”

The National Popular Vote bills, HB 4156 and HB 4440, are on second reading in the MI House of Representatives, and SB 126 and SB 295 are in the Senate Elections & Ethics Committee. LWVMI is advocating for their passage. Minnesota recently passed National Popular Vote legislation, giving 205 of the 270 electoral votes needed to implement the compact. An updated NPV Power Point presentation is now available

OTHER ISSUES: The budget bills, HB 4437 and SB 173 passed the Michigan House and Senate and are on the way to the Governor for a signature. If totals reach over \$82 billion, the Governor may still line-item veto

some items in the budget. Some highlights are listed below:

- Increases base funding for K-12 per pupil from \$8700 to \$9135, with additional money for at risk students.
- Makes lunch and breakfast programs free to every student. California, Colorado, and Maine have universal school meals program.
- Allocates money for student mental health
- Expands eligibility for pre-K programs
- Provides grants for Michigan's clean school bus program
- Increases funding for local transit and intermodal capital grants
- Provides money to build electric grid resilience
- Provides grants to communities to establish wind, solar and energy storage facilities, with 40% of the funding going to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.
- Allocates money for replacing lead pipes for lead-free water
- Allocates \$20 million for 2024 presidential primary election
- Removes previous language that prohibited DHHS from contracting with an organization that provides elective abortions, or abortion counseling or referrals, for family planning.

On June 22, the Senate Energy and Environment Committee held a hearing on SBs 271-273 that require electric providers regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to maintain renewable energy plans. LWVMI supports the bills.

For a complete list of legislation for which the League has a position, go to [Advocacy 2023](#) on LWVMI's website.. To see the bills, go to www.legislature.mi.gov.

Judy Karandjeff
Vice President Advocacy

Michigan Elections = LWV Observing Board of Canvassers



One hundred fourteen jurisdictions have elections in Michigan on August 8. This is a primary election for city races and a special election for proposals. We will be asking our League members to once again observe the Board of Canvassers (BOC) in each of the 49 counties that have an election. Like the recent May election, canvassing work will probably be only one day in the majority of counties. But because of the new law allowing military ballots to be counted if they are received up to 6 days after election day, some certifications may be delayed.

Presidents of the Leagues that cover any of the 49 counties, will be sent BOC information by the end of the month. Information will include links to the Sign-Up-Genius platform, the shift report and the 2022 training video for any observers who are new to the process.

Though this election is small compared to those in 2022, it is still important for the League to continue our practice of monitoring the certification process. If you have not done this before, try it! It is a great way to learn about what

happens after an election. Contact your local President and let them know you're interested – you can even buddy-up with someone.

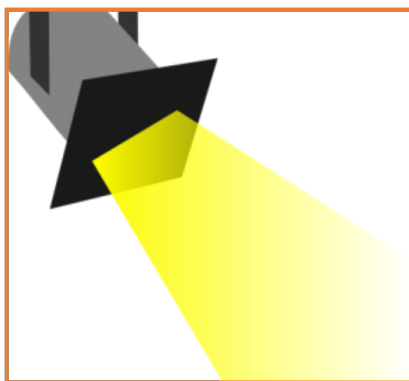
League Work Through a DEI Lens

With the beginning of the League year, we are reviewing our policies and considering how we will implement them in our work. We are encouraged to use our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy to be allies with members of the community that we would like to include in the audience at our events but who may not look like us, for example, BIPOC, persons with disabilities. If we want to support these members of our community, what might we do?

1. Where there are basic unknowns about those we want to support and include in our audience (e.g., racism, oppression, disability terms) let's do some research to teach ourselves so we can educate other allies.
2. When offering help, ask first, "Do you need help?" then "What kind of help do you need?" Rather than assuming certain help is needed, we should understand the needs of those we want to support and include in the event by being good listeners.
3. Open the event to those we want to support without taking over. In other words, remove the obstacles and allow these new audience members to speak for themselves.

Best wishes as you launch new League activities this year! Consider how you might make your event audiences look more like the communities you represent.

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey,
Vice President Membership
moburkey30@gmail.com



Local League Spotlights

LWV Mt. Pleasant's Leader, Theresa Turner wrote a letter to the editor of The Morning Sun concerning election security and it was published on July 13th. Following the good policy of not repeating recent comments from election deniers that had earlier been made the paper, Theresa instead wrote about the safeguards in place that make Michigan's

elections secure and accurate. [Read her letter here.](#) Nice job, Theresa!

On April 15th **LWV Northwest Wayne County's** general membership meeting was convened at the Plymouth District Library where a panel of five League members who are elected officials participated in a panel discussion on what it takes to run for office both financially and personally. The participating officials included a Township Supervisor, District Court Judge, State Representative, School Board member and a member of the District Library Board.

LWV of Dearborn-Dearborn Heights member Lisa Hicks-Clayton, the treasurer of the Dearborn Heights League was honored for completing all four levels of the Michigan Municipal League's Elected Officials Academy (EOA). Hicks-Clayton received the Ambassador Award, the highest level possible in the EOA program, making her one of just a handful of individuals who have achieved all four levels of the program.

The **League of Women Voters of Northern Lower Michigan** accepted an invitation from the City of Petosky to help plan an Arbor Day celebration on May 13th at the Petosky Winter Sports Park. An arborist spoke about care of trees, choosing the right trees, and identifying diseases. Eric Hemenway from the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa led a group walk to discuss native plants and their relationship to Odawa.



Microplastics: 2 Leagues Offering Info Events

Microplastics are found in our food, water, air, and even beer along the Great Lakes. Two presentations feature Arthur Hirsch, a noted environmental consultant with more than 30 years' experience. Learn more by attending one or both of these events:

July 31: LWV Berrien & Cass Counties will present an in-depth look at the growing threat of microplastics in the Great Lakes at 1:30pm at the Lincoln Township Library. The presentation will also be available on Zoom. See the [flyer here](#) or [click here](#) for the Zoom link.

August 17: LWVMI Environmental Network is also presenting a program on Microplastics in the Great Lakes, also with Arthur Hirsch at 6:00 pm on August 17th. This is a zoom event only. [Click here](#) to register to attend or to get a recording later .

Mentorship Opportunity

The Michigan Department of Corrections is in the process of implementing a mentoring program for returning citizens (including many women) to help them during their parole period. They are reaching out to groups like LWV and offering to give a presentation about the program and answer questions from anyone who may be interested in becoming a mentor.

If you're interested, contact **Tony Mills**, Mentor Coordinator of the Michigan Department of Corrections. (517) 230-2670 or MillsA13@michigan.gov

Copper Country (with Gogebic County Geographic Unit)
Dearborn/Dearborn Heights
Delta County
Detroit
Eastern UP MAL State Unit
Flint Area
Grand Haven Area
Greater Grand Rapids Area
Grand Traverse Area (with Crawford County Geographic Unit)
Grosse Pointe
Holland Area
Jackson Area
Kalamazoo Area (with Calhoun County Geographic 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
or check out Facebook pages for state and local LWVs

LWVMI Leadership 2023-2024

Co-President: Paula Bowman (NW Wayne County)
Co-President: Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo Area)
VP Voter Services: Judy Florian (Grosse Pointe)
VP Advocacy: Judy Karandjeff (Lansing Area)
VP Program: Maria Woloson (Oakland Area)
VP Membership: MerriKay Oleen-Burkey (Kalamazoo Area)
Secretary: Carla Barrows-Wiggins (Oakland Area)
Treasurer: Tom Wells (Grosse Pointe)

Directors

Voter Services: Carolyn Vertin (Tecumseh/Lenawee)
Advocacy: Connie Mitchell (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)
Membership/DEI: Shirley Madden (Manistee County)
Observer Corps: Lynne Kochmanski (Washtenaw County)
Membership/DEI: Cathy McAdam (Grosse Pointe)
League Links: Courtney Winell (Greater Grand Rapids Area)

Calendar



July 2023

Disability Pride Month

July 27: Local League Treasurers Zoom Call (7:00)

July 31: Berrien & Cass Microplastics Event (2:00)

August 2023

August 12: LWVMI Board Meeting

August 17: Local League Presidents Zoom Call (7:00)

August 17: Environmental Network Microplastics Event (6:00)

August 24: Voter Services Network Zoom Call (7:00)

August 26 Women's Equality Day

August 29: Communications Network Zoom Call (2:00)

Connect with us! League of Women Voters of Michigan

Phone: 517-484-5383

Email: office@lwvmi.org

Website: lwvmi.org

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

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

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

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