

## League Links

### March 2024

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### Communication in an Election Year

LWVMI is pleased to offer three virtual workshops this spring focused on communicating in an election year:



- Friday, March 22, Noon—The Civility Project [Register Here](#)
- Monday, April 8, 7pm—Conversations in an Election Year [Register Here.](#)
- Thursday, April 24, 7pm—Using Media Literacy to Navigate the Promise and Perils of AI [Register Here](#)

**The Civility Project.** Detroit-area journalists Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson aim to help Americans build civility – in workplaces, political spheres, and any gathering of people from different origins and perspectives. They place people before the moment of disagreement in discussion of how we come to our beliefs and viewpoints.

**Conversations in an Election Year.** Speaking with the media and speaking with individuals in your network of friends and family can pose challenges in a big election year. Reflect on the stakes and learn tips for each type of conversation! Brought to you by your Co-Presidents.

**Using Media Literacy to Navigate AI.** Journalism Professor Sue Ellen Christian shares tools and resources from media literacy to sharpen our ability to recognize and deal with mis- and dis-information generated by artificial intelligence.

These workshops are open to any League member. To register, click on the links above or in the calendar at [www.lwvmi.org](http://www.lwvmi.org) in the Members section on the [LWV Only page](#). If you need the password for the LWV Only page, please ask your local League president or one of us.

Hope to see you on Zoom!

Paula Bowman and Denise Hartsough  
LWVMI Co-Presidents

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### **The Civility Project March 22 at Noon**

We are very lucky to be hosting an hour-long presentation by celebrated journalists Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson on March 22 at noon. Mr. Finley and Mr. Henderson have been longtime friends, despite their

different perspectives “on pretty much everything.” The one thing they agree on is the importance of their friendship—which includes a healthy dose of disagreement and mutual respect. The two have developed a program that aims to build healthy disagreement and constructive dialogue while teaching people how to build civility in their relationships. You can register for this virtual event [here](#).



### **Another BOC Observation Program in the Books**

Approximately 400 hours were spent by League members at the post-election observation of the Boards of Canvassers. All 83 counties were either contacted in person or by phone to verify certification of the February 27 election, and the

Michigan Board of Canvassers certified on March 18. This was the first election where statewide early voting was a requirement, and though it added an extra layer of work for the canvassers, this obstacle was handled within the deadlines. The August, and especially the November elections will pose more challenges. We appreciate all the time and assistance from all League

members who helped with this important part of the election process.

-Paula Bowman

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## Voter Service Updates

### **Voter Information Brochure Available**

The 2024 Voter Information Brochure is complete and available in English, Arabic and Spanish versions. Although it's not a glitzy, fancy brochure, it contains updated information on new voting rights, based on the passage of Proposal 2 of 2022. We were fortunate to receive assistance with the translation from the Empowered Community Outreach Services (ECOS) in Detroit (Arabic), and the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan (Spanish). All three versions are available on our website at LWVMI.org in the LWV Only section. We hope local Leagues will share the brochures within their communities, as well as post on their websites.

### **Election Worker Survey**

Did you work during the February 27th Presidential Primary Election as a poll worker/election inspector, observer or challenger? We hope you will [take this quick survey](#) so we have a record of your work. So far, 76 people have completed the survey, but we know there are many more of you out there who worked either during early voting or on Election Day. Please help us gather this data for our donor reports and so we know how many of our local League members participate in this very important process. And thanks to all of you who worked at early voting sites and on Election Day!

### **High School Presentation Now Available**

We are pleased to announce a new presentation, with accompanying script, which is now available for local Leagues. This presentation includes those provisions of Proposal 2 of 2022 that our soon-to-be registered students need to know. We hope this is helpful as you schedule your high school registration events. The script can also be revised to accommodate presentations to college and university students. A special thanks to Pat Buckner, Northern Lower Michigan, Paula Bowman and Denise Hartsough, Co-Presidents and Promote the Vote (PTV) for their assistance with this project.

Also, if local Leagues have questions about information in their own presentations, please feel free to contact me. It is important that the information we disseminate is accurate and consistent.

### **VOTE411 Admins and Voter Service Reps**

Do we have updated information on your VOTE411 Administrators and Voter Service representatives? If the person serving in these positions has changed this year, please send me their name and email address. This will allow us to have a current contact and distribution list for updates and meeting notifications.

### **Voter Service Network Meeting**

The next Voter Service Network meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. Those who wish to attend can use the link below.



financial disclosures by April 15 and candidates must file by May 15. You can see the information [here](#).

**Lawsuit:** The Republican National Committee filed a [lawsuit](#) against Secretary of State Benson and the Elections Director in the U.S. Western District Court alleging that Michigan is not in compliance with the National Voting Rights Act that requires the voting registration rolls must be clean.

Judy Karandjeff  
LWVMI Vice President for Advocacy

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## LWVMI Observer Corps Training

On March 27th, at 3pm on Zoom there will be an Observer Corps training for interested members. Lauri Kingsbury from LWV Grosse Pointe will give a comprehensive training intended for new observers, veteran observers who would like a refresher, and any League member who is interested in finding out more about Observer Corps. To register click [HERE](#). You will be asked to state your local League along with contact information.

Lynne Kochmanski  
Observer Corps Director

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## MICRC Submits Final House Map to Court

### Final House Map Approved

On February 28, after holding two Public Hearings in Detroit on 10 draft proposed House maps, the Commission voted on the final House map. They approved the Motown Sound FC-E1 House map and sent it to the Court before the March 1, 2024 deadline. This map can be seen on the [www.michigan.gov/MICRC](http://www.michigan.gov/MICRC) website.

Approval of the map required a majority yes vote of those Commissioners present including at least 2 Democrats, 2 Republicans and 2 Independents, as prescribed in the Michigan Constitution. The first vote failed when only 1 Republican voted for Motown Sound FC-E1. It was approved on the second round of voting: 10 to 3, when 2/4 Republicans, 4/4 Democrats and 4/5 Independents voted yes.

### Appeal of District Court's December 2023 Ruling to U.S. Supreme Court: MICRC Resolution

In addition to approving the final map, the Commission also passed a proactive Resolution, based on the advice of their Litigation attorneys. The Resolution prevents the Plaintiffs in the lawsuit from using the adoption of a final House map as an argument to the U.S. Supreme Court that the Commission's appeal was moot.

Note: On February 8, 2024, the Commission voted to file a 60-day continuation of their appeal. The MICRC can withdraw their appeal if they so choose.



## **Court Appointed Special Masters**

The Drawing Special Master had to submit his House map to the Court by March 1, 2024.

The Reviewing Special Master had to submit his report on whether the Commissions map “lawfully remedies the constitutional violations identified in the Court’s December 21, 2023 opinion and order” by March 15.

## **Plaintiffs File Objections to MICRC MAP**

On March 8, the Plaintiffs filed their objections to the MICRC House map, asking the Court to reject the map.

They claim:

1. The remedial map prejudices Black voters by favoring incumbents elected under the unconstitutional and racially gerrymandered Hickory Plan.
2. The remedial state House map remains the product of race-based line drawing.
  - a. State House Districts 16, 17 and 18 preserve the Commission’s racially motivated “spoke concept”.
  - b. State House Districts 10 and 12 dilute Black voting strength.
3. The remedial state House map minimizes Black Opportunity, possibly in violation of the Voting Rights Act.

The MICRC had until March 15 to file their responses to the Plaintiffs’ objections with the Court.

## **Future Deadlines for House Maps**

March 20: deadline for both parties to file briefs on the Reviewing Special Master’s Report.

March 29: deadline for Court to approve a “remedial House redistricting plan”.

## **Future Deadlines for Senate Maps**

The Court ordered the redrawing of the following six Senate districts: 1, 3, 6, 8, 10 and 11 and surrounding districts as necessary.

April 12: deadline for parties to “jointly submit a proposed timeline for preparing Senate remedial redistricting plan”.

The redrawn Senate maps will take effect in time for the 2026 election.

## **Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, March 21, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon**

Commission meetings are open to the public and can be watched on the MICRC You Tube Channel. More information on the [www.michigan.gov/MICRC](http://www.michigan.gov/MICRC) website.

Susan Smith  
LWVMI Redistricting Chair

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## **Membership Leaders Network**

The Membership Leaders’ Network meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup> focused on

League Leadership Development. Using five steps we can begin a cycle of Leadership Development:

- 1) Assess leadership needs.
- 2) Identify members who might be future leaders.
- 3) Identify leaders who can guide or mentor future leaders.
- 4) Identify activities that offer leadership opportunities.
- 5) Train potential leaders, one-on-one or with more formal trainings.

Every event or activity a League holds is an opportunity to grow new leaders. The Event Planner that can be found under Membership Resources on the LWVMI website, has a column especially for Leadership Development. It prompts for actions to be taken with future leaders in planning the event, at the event and after the event. Begin with bite-sized assignments and gauge how quickly they might like to take on bigger projects. Our goal is to have all active members developing leadership skills. A recording of this meeting has been sent to the Membership Leaders' Network. If you did not receive it or would like to be included in future meetings, contact MerriKay (moburkey30@mail.com).

The Membership Leaders' Network will meet on April 10<sup>th</sup> for a program planned by the DEI Team: "How to be an Effective Ally to the Indigenous Community." While the focus is on the Indigenous Community, there will be suggestions for being an ally with other ethnic groups in your communities. See more information and the link to register under Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.).

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey  
LWVMI Membership VP

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**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**  
**Forum Topic: How to be an Effective Ally to the**  
**Indigenous Community**  
**April 10 | 7:00 PM via Zoom**

Registration Link for this Forum:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsc-6gqj4iHNMMVw1V70DeNZ-U0U1U3jIY>

In order to be an effective ally, you need to first ask yourself the following questions:

1. What does it mean to be an ally?
2. Do I know the local indigenous community?
3. What information do I need to know to be an effective ally?
4. Why do I want to be ally?

JoAnne Cook's presentation will cover these topics and provide a space to discuss the various questions, have a dialogue around them, and answer questions participants may have regarding this subject or other topics of interest. Discussion will be facilitated by Patty O'Donnell, League member

from LWV of Leelanau County and a member of the LWVMI DEI Team.

### BIO:

JoAnne Cook is a resident of Peshawbestown, Michigan and is an active member of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa/Chippewa Indians. She strives to live the Anishinaabe way of life, is a storyteller of the culture and traditions and shares with those who are seeking to understand this way of life. Cook has incorporated that belief into the development of alternative courts that utilize tradition and culture to promote healing and restore balance. She currently presents on native traditions and culture as well as consults with native and nonnative communities who are seeking to develop Peacemaking or wanting to live a balanced lifestyle.

JoAnne received her Business Administration degree from Ferris State University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Wisconsin. Her professional experience includes one term on Tribal Council and as a Tribal Court Judge. She currently teaches a short course at NMC extended education twice a year, titled, History of the Anishinaabek.

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey  
LWVMI Membership VP

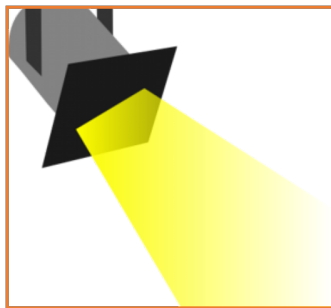
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## Need an Excuse to Spend Lots of Time on Social Media?

If you're feeling guilty about spending too much time on TikTok and Instagram, we have a reason to validate your obsession! From now until the November election, LWVUS is seeking out mis/dis/mal-information on social media. In collaboration with the Algorithmic Transparency Institute, LWVUS will be hosting weekly "election rumors briefings" to address trends of mis/dis/mal-information at 3:30-4:15 ET on Mondays. If you're interested in combatting mis/dis/mal-information, contact Paula Bowman for the meeting information.

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## Local League Spotlights

The **LWV of Livingston County** and guests witnessed an information-packed evening in February with Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel. With special guests from the Michigan Sierra Club leading the environmental conversation; Terri Wilkerson (LWV member), Stephen Brown, PhD, and Christy McGillivray along with AG Nessel provided updates on the court proceedings regarding the closing of Line 5 through the Straits of Mackinaw. The AG welcomed everyone to join her in Cincinnati on March 21st to demonstrate support. Questions on PFAS contamination in our local waterways and how to report their findings, and election security in the areas of Artificial Intelligence and the security of local clerks and workers were also discussed in detail. The AG brought up the legality of Livingston County's 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Sanctuary status announced



by local government officials and how troubling and dangerous that stance is in protecting Livingston County residents. All of these topics and more, made for an educational evening, which you can view on the [Leagues YouTube Channel](#). They invite you to share it with fellow members.

The **LWV Jackson** member Deborah Nagy was honored with the Susan B. Anthony/Harriet Tubman Award by the Jackson Women's History Council on March 10. Deborah was noted for her "unparalleled tenacity, grass roots organizing skills and commitment to human rights; she is a relentless champion of everyone's voting rights." Congratulations, Debbie!



The **LWV of Copper Country** along with cosponsors marked Equal Pay Day at the Husky statue at the campus of Michigan Technological University in Houghton on March 12<sup>th</sup>. They wore red to symbolize how far women and people of color are "in the red." This has been an almost annual event since 2016.

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## Local Leagues

Berrien/Cass Counties

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](http://www.lwvmi.org)  
or check out Facebook pages for state and local LWVs

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## 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)

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## Calendar



### March 2024

Women's History Month  
Deaf History Month  
National Foreign Language Month  
March 21: Environmental Network | 11:00 am  
March 21: Advocacy Update | 7:00 pm  
March 22: The Civility Project | All Members Invited | 12:00 pm  
March 26: Anniversary of SCOTUS [Rucho](#) Arguments  
March 27: Observer Corps Network | 3:00 pm  
March 28: Voter Service Network | 7:00 pm  
March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility

### April 2024

[Arab American Heritage Month](#)  
National Volunteer Month

April 8: Communication in an Election Year Workshop | 7:00 pm  
April 13: LWVMI Board Meeting | 9:30 am  
April 14-20: National Volunteer Week  
April 16: [DC Emancipation Day](#)  
April 22: Earth Day  
April 24: Media Literacy to Navigate AI Workshop | 7:00 pm

All LWVMI meetings are posted on [LWV Only page](#) of our website with links added when available.

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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>**

League of Women Voters of Michigan | 600 W. St. Joseph Street 3G, Lansing, MI 48933

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