



League Links

July 2024

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Michigan Well Represented at LWVUS Convention

Michigan members represented the largest in-person state delegation at the LWVUS Convention with 37 attendees. Additionally, there were 54 members who were voting delegates or observers in the virtual space. In-person attendees enjoyed the benefits of networking and the fun that goes along with mingling with 700 other LWV members from around the country that share similar values.

The schedule with plenaries, workshops and caucuses filled up every spare minute. We were proud of the Grosse Pointe League that led a packed workshop on book banning that was interesting and instructive. Denise Hartsough was on a panel regarding the progress of National Popular Vote in various states. Twenty-five members participated in Lobby Day on the day before the official Convention start. We met with Eli Schooley from Sen. Gary Peters office as a group, and then visited 8 different Representatives' offices to promote the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. It was thrilling to be on Capitol Hill!

A highlight of Convention was the election of the new LWVUS Board of Directors and the appointment of the new CEO, Celina Stewart. A number of us have worked with Celina, the long-time legal director of LWVUS, and know her to be engaging and competent.

The next LWVUS convention will be in 2026 – but the location has not been announced. The next LWVMI convention will be in Grand Rapids on May 16-18, 2025. This will be an in-person event and will not have a virtual option. Plan now to attend!

Paula Bowman and Denise Hartsough
LWVMI Co-Presidents



Voter Service Updates

GOTV Text Banking Pilot Project

Just a reminder: LWVMI is working with RelA2ve, Inc. to provide GOTV text banking for the August Primary and November General Election. This text banking tool, called ReachOut, will provide us with contact information from both political parties. Participation would involve a brief training with RelA2ve, along with sample messaging for local Leagues to use in this project. If you are interested in participating, please contact me as soon as possible.

Don't Forget to Order Your LWVMI Printed Voter Guides!

We are now taking orders for the printed voter guides for the November election. This 40+ page guide, which is printed every even-numbered election year, will contain the following candidate information:

- U. S. Senate
- U. S. House Representatives (Districts 1-13)
- State Board of Education
- University of Michigan, Michigan State and Wayne State Governing Boards
- Supreme Court
- Court of Appeals

In addition, the Guide will have comprehensive voter information and resources, including the new voting rights based on the passage of Proposal 2 of 2022. Once printed, we will provide the Guide to local Leagues in pdf format, along with a QR code. Order forms were sent to the Voter Service Network the week of July 15. If you didn't receive a form and would like to order, please contact jflo@comcast.net. The Guide will be printed and distributed in mid-September, so we're asking you to let us know as soon as possible what your needs are. In addition, we ask that you provide us with information and quantities you plan to deliver to your local libraries.

If your local League requires candidate information for a guide you print locally, a survey will be sent to the Voter Service Network the week of July 22nd, which will ask the districts/candidates you want sent to you for your guide.

August Primary Election Workers/Challengers

I know a lot of League members will be working the August Primary Election, either as poll workers/election inspectors or challengers. If you will serve in any of these election-related roles, please complete our August Primary Election Worker Survey after August 6. You can do so at this [link](#).

Promote the Vote, one of our democracy partners, is looking for nonpartisan election challengers. The responsibilities are described below.

Nonpartisan election challengers:

- Monitor the election process at early voting sites, polling locations, satellite offices, and absent voter counting boards
- May raise an official objection, called a "challenge," if the challenger believes that the process is not following Michigan's election law
- Must be registered to vote in Michigan
- Will receive training and credentials

No special background is required to be a nonpartisan challenger – just the desire to ensure all eligible Michigan votes get counted! **Promote the Vote will provide all challengers with comprehensive training on their rights and responsibilities, and on Michigan's election law.** New this year: the training is broken up into shorter, on-demand recorded modules to learn (and review) on your own schedule. If you are interested, you can sign up at this [link](#).

If you have any questions, please contact PTV's Legal Fellow Bailey Rechler at bailey@promotethevotemi.com.

Voter Service Network Meeting

The next Voter Service Network meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 7:00 p.m. A registration link is available [here](#). Once registered, you will receive confirmation on how to join the meeting.

Best wishes for a successful August Primary. I appreciate all of you who are stepping up to defend our democracy during this election season. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact me. Thanks, as always, for the excellent work you do!!

Judy Florian

Advocacy Update



The Michigan House and Senate left Lansing on June 27 after completing the appropriation bills. They are scheduled to return the end of July but what the agenda will be is unknown. The appropriation bills have not been signed by the Governor yet.

MI Voting Rights Act: The Senate voted to place Senate Bills 401 – 404 on third reading. When the Senate returns LWVMI hopes the bills will be passed. LWVMI sent out an action alert that is available under the TAKE ACTION button at www.lwvmi.org. Contacting Senators is still appropriate. Promote the Vote and many others voiced their support for the package. The analysis of the substitutes is available at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Recount Legislation: SB 603 and SB 604 have passed the House and Senate and were signed by Governor Whitmer on July 8. The new laws, PA 74 and PA 75 of 2024, will not take effect until 2025. The new laws will clarify the recount process. The analysis is available [here](#). LWVMI supported these bills.

Freedom of Information: SB 669 & SB 670 passed the Senate with a vote of 36-2. The bills will apply the Freedom of Information Act to the Legislature and Governor's Office. The bills are now in the House Government Operations Committee. LWVMI supports the bills. The analysis is available [here](#).

Statewide Ballot Proposals: No statewide ballot petitions with signatures were submitted to the Bureau of Elections by the July deadline.

Major Lawsuits:

Lindsey v Whitmer. On September 28, 2023, eleven lawmakers filed a lawsuit in federal court to invalidate two of Michigan's recent constitutional amendments concerning elections that LWVMI supported, Proposal 2018-3 and Proposal 2022-2. The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court Western District. On April 10, the court granted the state's request to dismiss the case. On May 7, an appeal was filed by the plaintiffs.

Northland v. Nessel. On February 12, Northland Family Planning Clinic and others filed a lawsuit challenging the 24-waiting period and informed consent laws. On June 25, the Michigan Court of Claims ruled the laws violate the Michigan Constitutional amendment on choice. The laws have been enjoined.

RNC v. Benson. On March 13, the Republican National Committee and others sued Secretary of State Benson arguing that Michigan is violating the National Voter Registration Act's requirement to maintain clean and accurate voter registration rolls. The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court

Western District. LWVMI has petitioned the court to be an intervenor on behalf of Michigan voters.

RNC v Whitmer. On July 15, the lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court Western District alleging Governor Whitmer violated the National Voter Registration Act when she issued a directive allowing several state and federal agencies to be used as voter registration agencies, including the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

YWCA of Kalamazoo v. Michigan. On June 27, the YWCA of Kalamazoo and ACLU of Michigan filed a lawsuit in the Michigan Court of Claims challenging the Michigan law that bans Medicaid funding for abortions.

Judy Karandjeff
LWVMI Vice President for Advocacy

MICRC: Remedial Senate Maps Sent to Court

MICRC Approves Senate Map: Crane A1

The procedure for approving a final map is prescribed in the Michigan Constitution and includes three possible steps: (1) approval by a Constitutional Majority of the Commissioners, (2) Ranked Choice Voting by the Commissioners and (3) a Random Draw by the Secretary of State.

When the Commissioners approved their original maps in December 2021, they did so by successfully reaching a Constitutional Majority on their first round of voting. A Constitutional Majority requires a majority vote of the Commissioners present which must include at least two Republicans, two Democrats and two Independents.

In March 2024, when the Commissioners approved the remedial state House map, Motown Sound, it took two rounds of voting to meet the requirements for a Constitutional Majority.

In June 2024, the Commissioners were not able to reach a Constitutional Majority, even after 5 rounds of voting.

Since the first step in the procedure was not successful, the Commission had to move on to the second step, Ranked Choice Voting. Details of the method are prescribed by the Constitution.

Each Commissioner may nominate one map to be on the ballot. The same map may be nominated by more than one Commissioner, but it will appear on the ballot only once. Four maps were nominated: Crane A1, Kellom, Szetela v3 and Lange.

Each Commissioner was required to rank each of the four maps on the ballot from 1-4. Each Commissioner's rankings were read aloud for the public record. Staff from the Department of State assigned points to each of the maps, depending on the number of votes received. The Crane A1 map

received the most points, 43. The remaining maps received the following points: Kellom 29, Szetela 30 and Lange 28.

In addition to receiving the most points, in order to be approved, the map had to be “ranked among the top half of plans submitted by at least two Commissioners not affiliated with the party of the Commissioner submitting the plan”.

Since Commissioner Curry, a Democrat, was the first to submit the ballot with the winning map, Crane A1, the map had to be ranked among the top half of maps submitted by at least two Republicans or two Independents. This requirement was easily met by 4 Republicans: Lange, Muldoon, Orton and Wagner and 5 Independents: Eid, Lett, Szetela, Valette and Weiss.

The Crane A1 map was submitted to the Court on June 27, as required. On July 5, the Plaintiffs submitted their report to the Court, supporting the Crane A1 map. On July 12 the Court appointed Reviewing Special Master submitted a positive report to the Court, saying the Crane A1 map met the requirements which had been laid out by the Court.

The Court has until July 26 to adopt a remedial Senate districting plan. If it adopts Crane A1, the map will be used for the 2026 Senate election.

How Fair is the Crane A1 Map?

Dr. Lisa Handley, the MICRC’s Partisan Fairness Consultant reviewed the partisan fairness scores for each of the 12 Draft maps that had been shared with the public at Public Hearings in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties.

Dr. Handley reported that there was no significant difference in the partisan fairness scores for the 12 draft maps, including the Crane A1 map, with the exception of the Dove map. The partisan fairness scores for the Dove map were outliers. The Dove map was not a “fair” map.

Based on that report, the League urged the Commission to eliminate the Dove map from consideration. Fortunately, the Commission did so.

Local League Support

Local Leagues from Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties provided League volunteers to help at the public hearings. Since the Secretary of State’s office had cut back on the number of their staff assisting at this year’s public hearings, the support of local League volunteers was crucial to the successful conduct of the public hearings. Thank you.

Susan Smith
LWVMI Redistricting Chair

Membership Leaders Network

From the June presentation Nora Pullen from LWVUS made to us about ChapterSpot, the new centralized membership platform for all Leagues across the country, and the unified dues process that will launch in January 2025 there are additional highlights to share:

1. When individuals join the League with the new membership system, they will be asked for only a few personal identifiers. Once they log into the system the first time more questions will be posed to learn more about these new members. Local Leagues will be able to expand on the survey questions as they wish.
2. New members will be able to sign up for Auto-Renew. They will be notified when their membership date comes up for renewal. All memberships will be on a rolling basis which is the reason that **having membership expiration dates for all members in the roster is so important.**
3. An increase in membership is expected to come with this new membership system because of the Auto-Renew feature, the fact that members can join from any site (local, state or national), the membership drives that national will run, and the pay-what-you-can model.
4. Be advised that **there will be one final PMP payment due in August 2025** based on the local League membership as of January 31, 2025. It will be important to account for this upcoming payment so the funds will be available.

For more specific information about the dues process under the new system and answers to many excellent questions raised at this meeting, check out the recording [here](#). If you further questions, LWVUS holds office hours on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 4PM. ChapterSpot Resources on the LWVUS management site includes FAQs and recordings from previous office hours.

Our next Membership Leaders' Network meeting will be held on **September 11**. A reminder will be sent in late August. If you have membership questions over the summer, please reach out to me at moburkey30@gmail.com. Wishing you an enjoyable summer!

MerriKay Oleen-Burkey
LWVMI Membership VP

Free Lyft Rides to the Polls!

LWVUS has partnered with Lyft who is offering free rides to an early voting site or to the polls on August 6th. The ride can't exceed a value of \$25, and we can also arrange for a return trip home. Michigan has a limited number of the Lyft ride codes. If your League can use some, please contact [Paula Bowman](#) and she'll get them to you.



BOC Observation Starts Soon

Our new training for 2024 BOC Observers is Monday, July 22. [Register here for the meeting](#). On Tuesday the 23rd, the training video, the Sign-Up Genius

link and other materials will all be on the LWVMI website's [LWV Only page](#). Remember that this is password-protected. If you don't have the password, ask your president, any LWVMI board member or the LWVMI office.



LWV Member Named Petoskey Prize Winner

Congratulations Sandra Sorini Elser, Chair of the LWVMI Environmental Task Force and Member of the LWVMI Advocacy Committee.

On October 6, the Michigan Environmental Council will honor Sandra with the Petoskey Prize this year. She was nominated by Legacy Land Conservancy where she is a Board member and volunteer attorney.

You can read more [here](#).

LWVGP Presents Workshop on Book Bans

One hundred fifty-eight delegates - 90 in-person and 68 via Zoom - attended the LWV Grosse Pointe's workshop: *Book Banning: How to Fight It* on the first day of LWV's National Convention in Washington, DC. They left energized and equipped with the tools to fight back against book challenges and bans.

LWVGP approved their public library and school libraries advocacy positions in 2022. In 2023, their position was unanimously approved as a state-wide League position at the LWVMI convention.

Lynne Pierce, LWVGP President, discussed the scope of the problem, the organized groups orchestrating local book bans, their tactics and resources for advocating on local and state levels. Sue Acton, LWVGP Past-President,

who led the effort to get the advocacy positions accepted locally, illustrated the study and approval process. She highlighted the work of our DEI Committee and Observer Corps, who did so much to bring this to their League's attention in 2022. Lynne and Sue fielded questions and comments from the in-person delegates. Lauri Kingsbury, (a virtual delegate to the convention), responded to chat questions from the virtual delegates on Zoom.

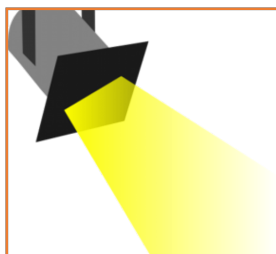
Several giveaway items—book bags and 96 books that were challenged or banned in local libraries during the past 10 years—were provided to attendees, along with bookmarks, buttons and various resources from the American Library Association (ALA). An 8-year-old girl attended the workshop with her mother and was very excited to receive copies of books!

Along with Lynne and Sue, this presentation was a collaborative effort from many other LWVGP members, including Judy Florian, Marge Freundl, Vicki Granger, Carol Lufburrow, Lauri Kingsbury, Julianne Phillips, and Annie Spence, who developed topics and put together a dynamite slide presentation. A copy of the presentation is available on their website at lwgrossepointe.org.

LWVGP was proud to represent LWVMI at Convention and provide information on this very important topic!



Pictured, left to right: Sue Acton, Judy Florian, Lynne Pierce, Julianne Phillips and Carol Lufburrow



Local League Spotlights

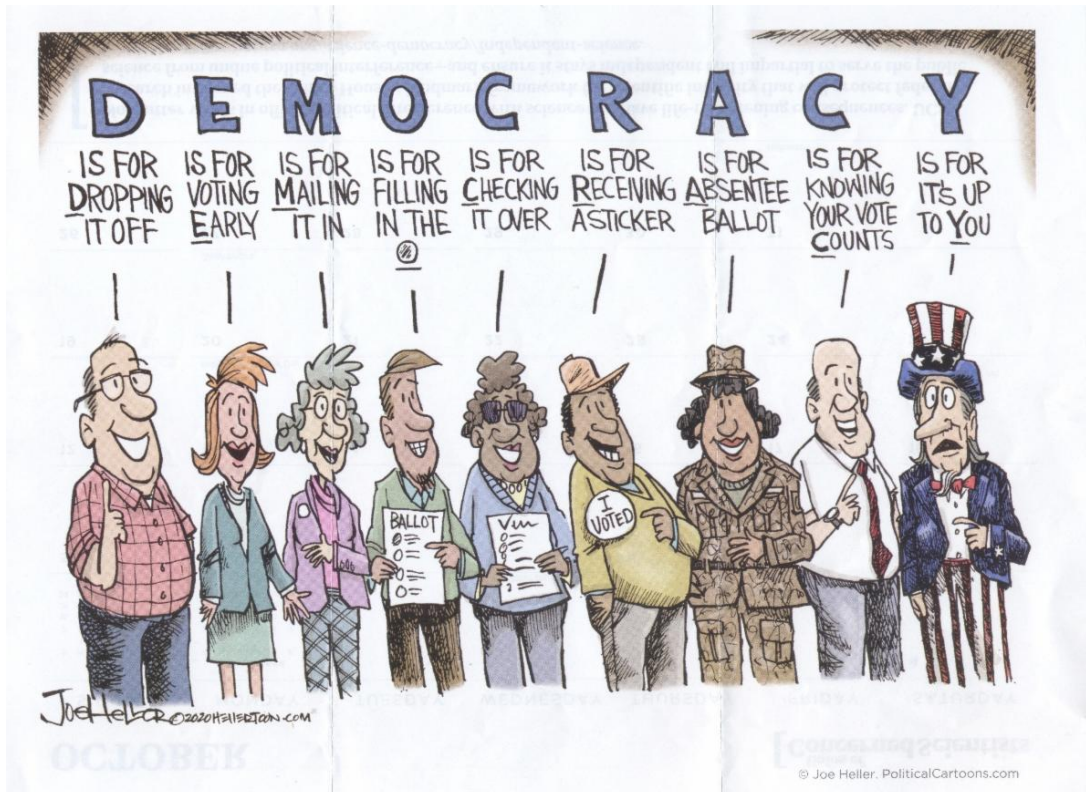
The LWV of Detroit had a June membership meeting featuring Rochelle Riley, the Director of Arts and Culture for the City of Detroit. Formerly she was a nationally syndicated columnist for the Detroit Free Press where she advocated for improved race relations, literacy, community building, and care for children.

At the annual meeting of the **LWV of Grand Traverse Area**, member, Marcia

Koppa, was recognized with the LWV-GTA Outstanding Service Award for her leadership in developing the Crawford County Geographic Unit. Congratulations, Marcia! A recent candidate forum produced by the Crawford County Geo Unit of the Grand Traverse Area League resulted in a front page article in the *Crawford Avalanche*. Great coverage of the forum and Marcia Koppa's work with the League. (Sorry, article is not available without a subscription).

The LWV of Mount Pleasant Area held its first "Coffee Klatch," on July 9th. A Coffee Klatch is a social gathering for informal conversation in which coffee is served. For LWV-MPA this event is an opportunity to chat about League news and catch up with fellow members while also providing an option to bring potential new members.

Members of the League of Women Voters of Lenawee County participated in the Tecumseh Bicentennial Parade



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
Lenawee 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
Troy
Washtenaw County

For more information go to www.lwvmi.org
or check out Facebook pages for state and local Leagues

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 (Lenawee County)
Advocacy: Connie Mitchell (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)
Membership/DEI: Shirley Madden (Manistee County)
Observer Corps: Lynne Kochmanski (Washtenaw County)
Membership/DEI: Cathy McAdam (Grosse Pointe)

Calendar



July 2024

Disability Pride Month

July 22: [Board of Canvassers Observer Training](#)

July 25: [Voter Services Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

August 2024

[Civic Health Month](#)

August 6: Anniversary of [Voting Rights Act of 1965](#)

August 10: LWVMI Board Meeting

August 15: State and Local League Presidents Meeting | 7:00 pm

August 18: Anniversary [19th Amendment](#) Ratification

August 22: [Voter Services Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

August 24: [Women's Equality Day Luncheon in SE Michigan](#) | 12:00 pm

August 26: Women's Equality Day

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

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>

