



League Links

July 2025

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President's Message - Unite and Rise 8.5, and Petitions

Presidents' Message

Transitions are times of challenges plus new and energizing ideas. A convening of LWV leaders from all but a few states took place in Washington DC in late June. LWVMI was represented by newly elected co-president Lynne Kochmanski, co-president Denise Hartsough, and newly elected VP of Advocacy, Sandra Sorini Elser. The weekend was an opportunity to network with state leaders to discuss everything from finances to challenges and victories. Compared to some states, Michigan has more laws and constitutional provisions that embody LWV values. However, our state has recently seen several proposals that would curtail our existing voting rights and which mirror what is happening at the federal level. The League is taking a stand and will push back against anti-democracy actions and policies everywhere they appear. This was the message loud and clear we took away from Council.

Unite and Rise 8.5

With the rolling out of [Unite and Rise 8.5](#) by LWVUS there will be opportunities for local Leagues to engage in this national mobilization campaign. Our state League is creating a Mobilization Network composed of

local League representatives. It will meet twice each time a new Unite and Rise 8.5 Playbook is released, once at the start of the new Playbook and then halfway through the 90-day period assigned to each Playbook. The network will provide a place where local Leagues can share ideas, strategize, and exchange materials to better engage in Unite and Rise 8.5 at the local level. We ask each local League to designate one representative for this network. Please send the name and contact information to Lynne at lynne.kochmanski@gmail.com. More information will be sent to all local League network representatives in the next couple of weeks. The next Playbook will be released before August 1st.

Petitions, Petitions, and more Petitions

Voters are very confused by petitions, especially when there are so many of them! Currently we are following 7 petitions and 1 ballot proposal. To help educate voters about all the petitions out there we are creating a Know What You Sign flyer which local Leagues may use at tabling events. Of the 7 petitions, currently 3 would require Michigan voters to show documentary proof of citizenship. There is no information about which of these will be circulated or when. See our [Proposal Tracking](#) document for specific information on each petition.

As the summer winds down, stay engaged and informed, and also enjoy the rest of the season!

In League,
Lynne Kochmanski and Denise Hartsough
LWVMI Co-Presidents

Voter Service Updates

August Primary Elections

Elections will be conducted in 129 jurisdictions in 51 counties on August 5th. Although not required, 12 jurisdictions will also offer early voting sites.

Although this is an 'off-election year', local elections can be more important than those at the state or national level. The ballots will include local races (mayor, city council, etc.) In some communities, there may also be ballot proposals. Our VOTE411 admins are working diligently to provide candidate information for voters in their communities.

We encourage League members to participate in the election process by serving as poll workers, poll challengers or poll watchers.

If you're conducting candidate forums, don't forget our resources, including the LWVMI Candidate Forum Guide and sample questions. These are available on our website in the LWV Only section. Please contact me or a Local League President/Leader for the password.

Promote the Vote (PTV) also has a wealth of election information available at michiganvoting.org, including deadline dates, absentee voter ballot options and much more.

2025 Voter Information Brochure Now Available in Arabic and Spanish

We are pleased to announce that our 2025 Voter Information Brochure is now available in both Arabic and Spanish. You can access all language versions (English, Arabic and Spanish) on the LWVMI website at this [link](#).

Michigan Secretary of State Resources

The Secretary of State's website has many resources you can use to educate voters. I've included links to a few of them here. Feel free to put on your website or copy and distribute at tabling events.

[A Guide to Voter ID at the Polls](#)

[Information for Michigan Voters](#)

[Michigan Voter Information Center](#)

[Voting Myths and Fact](#)

[Voting Absentee Do's and Don'ts](#)

[Voting at the Polls Do's and Don'ts](#)

Voter Service Network Meeting

The next Voter Service Network Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 31, 7:00 p.m. **Note: This is a one-time change from the 4th Thursday due to a conflict with my schedule.** Please use this [link](#) to register for the meeting. Once registered, you will receive instructions on how to join the meeting. An agenda will be sent to the Network the week of July 27th. If anyone has any agenda items, please send them my way.

In the meantime, if you have questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

Judy Florian
VP for Voter Service
jflo@comcast.net



August 5 Election: Key Dates

NOW	Request an absentee ballot
JUNE 26	First day that you can vote in person with an absentee ballot at your local clerk's office
JULY 21	Last day to register to vote online (after July 21, you'll need to register in person at your local clerk's office)
JULY 22	Last day to drop your ballot in the mail (after July 22, we recommend returning your ballot in person)
AUGUST 4 @ 4pm	Deadline to vote in person with an absentee ballot at your local clerk's office, if you're already registered to vote where you live (after that, you must vote at your polling place on Election Day)
AUGUST 5	Election day! Polls are open from 7am until 8pm. If you need to register, you can register at your local clerk's office until 8pm

Board of Canvassers Observation - August 5 Election

Observing the Board of Canvassers (BOC) has become a signature piece of the League of Women Voters in Michigan. Our democracy partners depend on the eyes and ears of League members to report on the BOC's work and/or the areas of concern at these public meetings.

We will need your help for the August Election. There will be 129 jurisdictions in 51 counties conducting elections on August 5. (For more details, here is the list from the Michigan Department of State: [Jurisdiction Elections for August 2025](#).) Some County Boards will take only 1-2 days to certify, while others will take the entire 14 days (including weekends). The more populous the county, the longer the canvassing process. There are a lot of 2-hour shifts to fill!

Below are links to the following resources.

1. [FAQs](#)
2. [BOC Memo](#)
3. [BOC Shift Report Word document](#)
4. [BOC Shift Report](#)
5. [County Canvass Checklist](#)
6. Kathy Poore's [BOC Cheat Sheet](#) (2nd page is the [Shift Report in Word](#), so that you can preview the questions)
7. [BOC Observer Lead Instructional Guide](#)
8. SignUpGenius (SUG), which goes live on July 25. The link will be provided when available.

To serve as a BOC Observer, training is mandatory. Observers should watch/re-

watch the League's [training video](#) with election attorney Mark Brewer, which was conducted live on July 22, 2024.

Additional resources:

- The [MI Bureau of Elections Boards of County Canvassers Manual](#)
- [LWVMI BOC video](#)
- [One-pager from MichiganVoting.org.](#)
- PTV recorded webinar, [How Election Results Become Official](#)

Questions regarding the BOC Observation Program can be directed to Sara Weertz, LWVMI Project Manager, at saraweertz.lwvmi@gmail.com. Thanks in advance for your participation in this very important process!



Advocacy Update LWVUS Federal Judiciary Position Adopted June 2025



Last month, the League of Women Voters National Board adopted the new League position on the Federal Judiciary.

The Federal Judiciary position was adopted using the long-standing League practice of grassroots study to arrive at member understanding and agreement. 321 Leagues representing 45 states and the District of Columbia participated in the study.

Prior to the local Leagues' consensus meetings, the LWVUS study committee compiled extensive research papers and held informative panel discussion sessions on the 4 main issue areas surrounding the Federal Judiciary:

- Transparency
- Ethics
- Accountability
- Independence

Local Leagues from all over Michigan participated in the study last winter and spring and submitted their consensus reports in April of 2025.

The Federal Judiciary position is now part of the League's official public policy positions and is available as a supplemental PDF document, which can be found [here](#).

The Federal Judiciary position will be folded into the next edition of Impact on Issues. Until that time, Leagues may refer to the document in the link above

Sandra Sorini Elser
LWVMI Vice President for Advocacy

Our BOC Manager is Back!

We're happy to announce that Sara Weertz, our sensational Board of Canvassers Observer Program Chair is back! Sara will be organizing the post-election BOC programs after the August and November elections. As she did in the November 2024 election, Sara will again be using County "Leads" to improve communication among the observers. If those who served as Leads in 2024 are willing to do this again, please contact Sara at saraweertz.lwvmi@gmail.com. Training will be provided. If you have an election in your county, watch for the Sign Up Genius to come out in late July.

Local League Advocacy Committees

Networking meetings among local Leagues and the State League have been a successful means of sharing information for more effective League work. Examples are Networks for voter service, membership, treasurer, Observer Corps, the environment. The State League Advocacy Committee is in the process of developing a network meeting opportunity for local League Advocacy Committees.

Please tell us if your Local League has an advocacy committee or if you would like to form one. This is an opportunity to learn some tips on effective Local League advocacy, share stories, learn from each other.

Please send your contact information from your local League to the LWVMI VP for Advocacy, Sandra Sorini-Elser (sandrasorinielser@gmail.com) and Christina Schlitt (BCSchlitt@aol.com).

We will then send a Google survey to find times that will be mutually convenient for meeting.

Thanks for your interest. Remember our democracy needs the League now more than ever!



Breaking New Ground!

For the first time ever, the LWV is partnering with a musical artist to promote civic engagement. Musical hall-of-famer, Cyndi Lauper, has invited the LWV to be a part of her final tour and meet with concert goers across the country this summer!

League members will speak with Lauper's fans as they attend her "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" tour. We will greet people as they arrive and talk to them about the importance of voting, registering to vote and VOTE411.

Members of the Detroit, Macomb and Oakland Leagues will be on hand at Pine Knob on August 1st to share voting information and drum-up support for the League. The National League is organizing this event, supplying all materials from set-up to take-down, and providing LWV swag to hand out to attendees.

This is such an exciting opportunity for the League! Cyndi Lauper is a supporter of the League and of civic responsibility. It is an honor to be included in her tour!

Deborah Bunkley, LWV Detroit
Kathy Poore, LWV Macomb
Maria Woloson, LWV Oakland Area

*Girls
Just Wanna
Have Fun*

FAREWELL TOUR

Visit Us at the
Action Center



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN®



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®



Planned
Parenthood®

Cyndi Lauper

Save the Date
Renewable Energy in the UP and
All of Michigan

September 24 at 7pm via Zoom



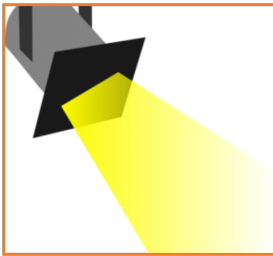
Please save the date for a League of Women Voters of Michigan educational presentation on September 24 at 7pm via Zoom on *Renewable Energy in the UP and All of Michigan*.

The Michigan 2023 Clean Energy and Jobs Act promises 100% clean energy by 2040, and 60% Renewable Energy by 2035.

Join us as we explore how Michigan can get there, and what challenges there are for Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Our speaker will be Douglas Jester, Managing Partner of 5 Lakes Energy. Douglas is a well know speaker specializing in economic analysis and modeling for energy policy and has provided expert witness testimony before utility regulatory commissions. Immediately prior to joining 5 Lakes Energy, Douglas served as senior energy policy advisor in the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth. In that capacity, he applied scientific, engineering, and economic principles to the formation and adoption of energy policies for the State of Michigan.

A reminder with the Zoom Registration link will be provided closer to the Program Date.



Local League Spotlights

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 2025-2026

Co-President: Denise Hartsough (Kalamazoo Area)
Co-President: Lynne Kochmanski (Washtenaw County)
VP Voter Services: Judy Florian (Grosse Pointe)
VP Advocacy: Sandra Sorini Elser (Washtenaw County)
VP Program: Ellen Lafferty (Livingston County)
VP Membership: Carla Barrows-Wiggins (Oakland Area)
Secretary: Maria McCarville (Saginaw County)
Treasurer: Tom Wells (Grosse Pointe)

Directors

VOTE411: Anne Jackson (Washtenaw County)
Advocacy: Connie Mitchell (Dearborn/Dearborn Heights)
Observer Corps: Tina Pawlak (Holland Area)
League Links: Courtney Winell (Greater Grand Rapids Area)
DEI Team: Sheryl Theriot (Detroit)
Development: Carrie Moon-Dupree (Northwest Wayne County)
Director at Large: Charles Thomas Jr. (Detroit)

Calendar

July 2025

[Disability Pride Month](#)

July 23: [Democracy in Your Hands Series](#) - Paula Bowman
and Denise Hartsough on LWVUS Panel | 11:00 am

July 31: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm



August 2025

[Civic Health Month](#)

August 6: Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965

August 9: LWVMI Virtual Board Meeting | 9:30 am

August 12: [National Poll Worker Recruitment Day](#)

August 14: Presidents/Leaders Meeting | 7:00 pm

August 18: Anniversary of 19th Amendment Ratification
August 26: Women's Equality Day
August 28: [Voter Service Network Meeting](#) | 7:00 pm

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>

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