



League of Women Voters - Lansing Area

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy



CAPITOL VOTER

JULY 2018

CAPITOL VOTER HIGHLIGHTS

**CONSIDER
BECOMING AN
ELECTION
INSPECTOR**

**NEW EDUCATION
WORK GROUP**

**MI DEPT. OF ED
SEEKS INPUT ON
SOCIAL STUDIES
STANDARDS**

**GUN VIOLENCE
PREVENTION WORK
GROUP INFO**

**CO-PRESIDENTS
MESSAGE**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Candidate Forums:

- July 17-Michigan House District 68 (7:15 PM) and House District 69 (6 PM)-Lansing Public Media Center
- July 25-Michigan House District 69, 6 PM-Delta Township Library
- July 31-Michigan House District 67, 6:30 PM-Unitarian Universalist Church

Other Events:

- August 14-Book Group at 10 AM at Grand Traverse Pie Company in East Lansing
- August 27th-Women's Equality Day lunch at Hall of Fame Café-11:30 AM
- September 20-Fall Kick-Off Program-5:30 pm-

**NEW BOARD
WELCOMED**

-light supper and panel discussion on election security.

**REDUCED
MEMBERSHIP FEE
FOR STUDENTS**

MESSAGES FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

**PROMOTE THE VOTE
PETITIONS
DELIVERED**

The May 15th annual meeting brought changes in leadership for LWVLA; the messages below reflect those changes.

**LWVLA REGISTERS
2000+ NEW VOTERS**

A thank-you from Beth Moore:

**VOTE411 NOW ON-
LINE**

Camilla Davis, the other half of the co-president team for the past four years, decided to step down but is still devoting considerable time in support of the League. We all appreciate the wonderful organizational skills and friendly approach that Camilla brought to the role. Camilla will continue to format the Voter and also will be helping with membership responsibilities. We wish Camilla and Gary terrific adventures in this next phase, minus all of the League demands.

**GET-OUT-THE VOTE
CAMPAIGN**

I am remaining in the co-president role only for one more year, to make the transition through the election. Margo Smith is serving as the other co-president.

**LWVLA SPONSORS
CANDIDATE FORUMS**

A Message from Camilla Davis:

**BOOK GROUP TO
DISCUSS
SOTOMAYOR BOOK**

It's been an honor to serve as co-president of LWVLA for the past four years. The opportunity to work with so many talented and exceptional people has been beyond expectation. Many thanks to members so willing to volunteer in support of League activities, to the LWVLA board for their dedication and thoughtfulness, and to Beth Moore for her commitment to working together to make this League grow and prosper. Best wishes to Margo and Beth as they begin this new chapter in LWVLA. As Beth mentioned in her message, I'll still be involved in League activities, helping in any way I can. I won't be disappearing from something that's been an important part of my life for the last four years

**PROTECTING
MICHIGAN'S
WATERS**

**LWV-LMR SPEAKER
ADVOCATES FOR
WATER**

**DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION FOCUS
OF LWVUS
CONVENTION**

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**CONSIDER
BECOMING AN
ELECTION
INSPECTOR**

Several speakers at the LWVUS convention encouraged League members to work at the polls on election-day as a way to learn more about

An Introduction from Margo Smith: Coming Full Circle In Hilo, Hawaii, where I first joined the LWV, I worked on voter education, developing a workshop on education and advocacy. When we relocated to Michigan in the 1970s, I joined LWVLA and served as chair of the international relations committee, president, secretary, and now will serve as co-president. In early 2017, I retired from MSU College of Human Medicine where I directed programs in Service-Learning, Global Health, Graduate Studies, and was

the election process. Contact your local clerk for more information.

LWVLA LAUNCHES NEW EDUCATION WORK GROUP



League members interested in educational issues are encouraged to attend the first meeting of this new workgroup on Tuesday, July 25 at 5 PM at Grand Traverse Pie Company in East Lansing. The committee will explore League positions on education and consider issues that need attention. If you have questions or are interested in this committee, contact Jill Kroll, chairperson, at jck0120@gmail.com.

DEPT. OF ED. SEEKS MORE INPUT ON

assistant director for the MD-PhD program. Previously, I worked as a legislative aide to former State House Representative Lynn Jondahl, 69th district. Now I will be coordinating the LWVLA Get-Out-the-Vote Campaign.

NEW BOARD WELCOMED

In addition to Margo, three new members were welcomed to the board: Sherri McConnell is the new secretary, Jill Kroll is the chairperson for the new education workgroup and Bob Miller joins the board in an at-large position. We also said farewell to Deanna Hanieski who had served on the board for a long time in many roles.

(A complete list of board members appears in the left column.)

LEAGUE OFFERS REDUCED MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR STUDENTS

The Lansing LWV board recently voted to set the annual dues at \$5 for students, following actions by the national and state LWV boards to eliminate Per Member Payments for students. A student is defined as an individual enrolled either full or part-time in an accredited institution. The minimum age for a voting membership is 16, according to the LWVUS Bylaws.

PROMOTE THE VOTE PETITIONS TURNED IN TO SOS

Boxes of signed petitions supporting the proposed constitutional amendment to make voting more convenient and accessible were presented to the Michigan Secretary of State on July 9. Members of the sponsoring coalition (ACLU, LWVMI and NAACP) thanked volunteers from throughout the state for collecting the 430,000 signatures and recognized that now the campaign to educate voters begins.

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

With the public interest in the development of the revised Social Studies standards, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is extending the public input period to September 30, 2018. For a list of the public hearings, a description of the development process, and a link to the standards, see the [Michigan Department of Education website](#).

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO MEET

This group is continuing to meet regularly to explore issues and examine resources. Two members, Marty Couretas and Melinda Frame, have authored a research-based paper for LWVMI titled "Gun Violence: Protecting Our Children." [Click here](#) for a link to the paper.

The next meeting is August 11 at the East Lansing Library.

The Lansing Area League collected more than 800 signatures, thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers. Melinda Frame did a terrific job of keeping track of the petitions.

LEAGUE REGISTERS MORE THAN 2000 NEW VOTERS

Marilyn Wilson, Voter Service Chair reports: "We have had a very successful high school voter registration season, with 12 high schools participating, along with two successful drives at Peckham Industries, for a total of 483 newly registered voters. Twenty League members have worked at voter registration sites over the past three months." One of the high school students wrote to thank the League for helping him learn more about the electoral process and another wrote "thanks to the League for helping me in another step towards having my voice heard."

The newly registered high school students were asked for contact information and they will receive text messages with information about candidate forums and where to get information about candidates and issues.

This summer, League volunteers have been working at the MSU Academic Orientation Program to register more than 1900 new voters, with another week remaining in the program. Volunteers mention how enthusiastic the students are about being registered.

There will still be voter registration efforts through the summer and fall. If you are interested in helping, please contact Marilyn Wilson at wilsonmlwvla@gmail.com or 517-927-7164.

VOTE411 IS NOW ON-LINE

Lansing area voters can now access the League's on-line voter guide (www.VOTE411.org), containing biographical information about state and local candidates and their views on issues. Type in your address and see information on everything that is on your ballot,

For more information about this committee, please contact Marty Courtaes at couretam@comcast.net or 517-337-8165).

**2018 - 2019
LWVLA BOARD**

Co-Presidents

Beth Moore
Margo Smith

VP Program

Ann Marston

**Secretary/
Membership**

Sherri McConnell

Treasurer

John Hanieski

Director-at-Large

Bob Miller

Education

Jill Kroll

Environment

Ellen Link

**Finance/Fund
Raising**

Debby Starnes

**Membership/Web
Master**

providing a handy reference for election-day. A recent Facebook exchange, answered a frustrated voter with a series of comments promoting the value of VOTE411. Tell your family, friends and colleagues about this important resource. Thanks to Anna Scott for working so diligently to get VOTE411 posted.

Help Wanted: League volunteers are needed in late August to call candidates and remind them that their VOTE411 information is due. Contact Beth Moore if you are available to help with this important task (mooreeee@msu.edu)

**GET-OUT-THE-VOTE CAMPAIGN
PLANNED BY LEAGUE**

Margo Smith will be coordinating activities with League members and with leaders of organizations in the larger community who will be planning similar actions. The focus for the campaign is to talk with potential voters, answering questions about the mechanics of voting and adding personal encouragement about the importance of voting. One idea from NAACP is to enlist the help of churches in displaying information on their message boards about the last day to register to vote, and reminders to vote on Election Day. Margo says: "I did this with my church, and they will put up messages! Please consider asking your churches."

The League efforts are focused on both the primary and the general election. The voter turnout in primaries is typically below 20 percent of eligible voters and the campaign efforts are intended to increase those numbers. League volunteers will be at key locations in Lansing and East Lansing, handing out information about VOTE411 and answering questions about voting. This effort will take place daily from 11:00 AM - 1:30 PM. Monday-Friday, July 30 - August 7. The primary spots initially targeted for passing out the VOTE 411 cards include: 1)The MSU Campus: Footbridge between the Administration and Wells Hall; MSU Union; Brody Hall 2) Downtown Lansing: Washington Square and Allegan; Capitol and Allegan 3) East Lansing Public Library. Please contact Margo Smith if you are interested in helping with any of the Get-Out-the-Vote Activities:

Judy Culham

smithmk@msu.edu or 517-881-2836.

New Member Liaison

Barbara Bidigare

**Parliamentarian/
Government**

Cele Friestater

Publicity

Carol Swinehart

Voter Service

Marilyn Wilson

**LEAGUE SPONSORS FOUR CANDIDATE FORUMS
PRIOR TO PRIMARY**

Two candidate forums will be held before the primary elections for the **68th and 69th House Districts** on **Tuesday, July 17**, at the Lansing Public Media Center, 2500 South Washington Avenue, Lansing. Co-sponsoring with the League are the local chapters of the ACLU, NAACP, and Represent Us. Candidates for the 69th district, which includes the City of East Lansing and Meridian Township, will begin to speak at 6:00 PM. The forum for the 68th district, located in Lansing, begins at 7:15 PM.

Wednesday, July 25, is the forum for candidates for the **71st state House of Representative** seat in Eaton County, sponsored by the League of Women Voters. The forum is scheduled for 6 PM at the Delta Township Library. Contact Deanna Hanieski for more information, haniesd@lcc.edu.

Tuesday, July 31, is the forum for candidates for the **67th state House of Representatives** seat in south Lansing and the out-county area, co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters and Action for Greater Lansing. The forum is scheduled for 6:30 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church on South Pennsylvania Ave. For more information contact Margo Smith, smithmk@msu.edu.

**SEE PHOTOS OF
LWVLA VOTER
REGISTRATION**

**VISIT OUR
FACEBOOK PAGE**



**BE SURE TO LIKE
US!**

**LEAGUE BOOK GROUP WILL
DISCUSS SOTOMAYOR BOOK**

Plan to join members of the League Book Group on Tuesday, August 14 at 10 a.m. at the Grand Traverse Pie Company in East Lansing. The group will be discussing Sonia Sotomayor's memoir, *My Beloved World*. East Lansing/MSU's One Book One Community Program has chosen this book, so there will be opportunities to hear the Justice on Sunday, August 26 at the East Lansing High School Theater or Monday August 27 at the Breslin Center. For information about the events, see <http://www.onebookeastlansing.com/> Everyone is welcome to attend book group sessions.

QUICK LINKS

[LWVLA WEB SITE](#)

[LWVMI WEB SITE](#)

[LWVUS WEB SITE](#)

[LWVLMR**](#)

****LWVLA is a member of the LWV - Lake Michigan Region. Click on LWVLMR for an update of the organization's initiatives.**

PROTECTING MICHIGAN'S WATER: TAKING ACTION

The Environmental Workgroup sponsored a well-attended public forum designed to provide information about ongoing challenges to the integrity of Michigan's precious waters and how individuals can become involved.

Speakers included Sean McBrearty of Oil and Water Don't Mix, discussing the dangers posed by Line 5 (the pipeline under the Straits of Mackinac); Peggy Case of Citizens for Water Conservation, who spoke about both Nestle water extractions and the Flint water crisis; and Beth Rogers, an MSU Extension educator from Gratiot County who works with farmers on agricultural run-off issues.

Handouts on the above topics as well as information on PFAs (chemical water contaminants), neonicotinoids (insecticides suspected of harming bees), PAH contamination of driveway sealants, and legislation affecting our environment can be viewed on the web at: http://lansing.mi.lwvnet.org/files/protectmichiganswater-fliers-2018-0416_3.pdf. Anyone wanting further information or who is interested in joining the work group can contact Ellen Link at link767@gmail.com or 517-651-2005.

SPEAKER TALKS ABOUT WATER ADVOCACY

Margo Smith, LWVLA co-president, attended the LWV Lake Michigan Region Water Advocacy Workshop in Chicago.

Harold Lerner, public interest attorney, said, "Stay engaged, don't give up on democracy, and play to win!" In his address at the Water Advocacy Workshop in Chicago, Lerner said to begin with values. Safe, clean drinking water is something we all share as a core value; this unites people and transcends partisan politics. Ask legislators if safe, clean drinking water is something they support. This strategy was used to win bipartisan support in Congress to reject President Trump's deep cuts to the

budget for Great Lakes Restoration. Many people contacted their members of Congress who responded and then were thanked for their support.

Lerner said not everything is done at the Congressional level- that state and local government officials can do lots of good things to protect waterways and water sources. He also noted that citizen science has a role to play in engaging ordinary people. In Chicago, mobile hand-held monitors are being used to collect data on levels of particulate matter that contribute to high rates of asthma. Kids strap monitors to their backpacks and bikes to collect data which is used to address problem areas. In one example a remedy to synchronize traffic lights prevented trucks from stopping and spewing matter into the air.

To Lerner, litigation should not be the first step, but is sometimes necessary. He gave an example of a publicized lawsuit which garnered public support to help Toledo clean up toxic algae that was polluting drinking water. Lerner exhorted LWV members to stay engaged in this fight for our democracy and, "Play to win!"

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE FOCUS OF LWVUS CONVENTION

More than 900 delegates from throughout the country recently attended the League's 53rd convention in Chicago. Beth Moore and Margo Smith, LWV-LA co-presidents, represented this League. In addition to the business of a convention- program adoption, budget, bylaws- there was particular emphasis on the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion if the organization is going to continue to thrive. More information about convention is available on the [LWVUS website](#), including an excellent video about the League, *Creating a More Perfect Democracy*.

Delegates heard author Ellen Weiss, *A Woman's House*, tell about the final push for women gaining the right to vote. She also talked about the founding of the League of Women Voters in Chicago in 1920.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We welcome several new members, bringing our membership to about 200:

- Nate Burmeister is an incoming MSU James Madison student who was given a League membership as a graduation present
- Lois Furry is a resident of Holt
- Sharon Furman and Paul Zielinski, from Charlotte, are re-joining the League
- Patricia Huddleston lives in East Lansing
- Dottie Schmidt lives in East Lansing
- Whitney Sorrow is a resident of Lansing

We also offer our condolences to League member Patterson Terry upon the recent death of his wife, Beverly. Patterson and Beverly of Fowlerville joined the League in early 2017 and have been involved with the voter service committee.