

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *DETROIT*

JUNE - JULY 2018 ISSUE

League of Women Voters

Detroit Annual General

Meeting – June 16, 2018 at 2:00 pm

to 4:00pm at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 13651 Dequindre, Detroit, 48212.

On the agenda we have **Food, Fun, and a speaker**, Ken Manley, State Board member who will share his experiences and ideas about the League.

Although we will have a business meeting, we will not need to vote on officers this year since all current officers still have a year remaining on their position.

Come to hear about all of the things the League is doing. You are invited to join us in making this a very productive election year! Interested friends or family members are always welcome.



Please save items for the Sept. 1st garage sale in Hamtramck. More information will be available soon. This will be the second annual fundraiser to carry out the League Mission.

June and July Schedule of Activities

- Candidates Forum Planning meeting – June 23rd at 10:00am, at Rhonda Craig’s home, 19000 Wildemere, Detroit. Members who are interested in volunteering to work on the up-coming primary and general elections’ candidate forums are encouraged to attend. This year, the League is working in partnership with CitizenDetroit and the AKA sorority to put on the forums.

More information on the first forum and dates of additional forums, page 3. More information to follow.

- *Detroit LWV Annual General Meeting – June 16* - 2:00 – 4:00 Pm, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 13651 Dequindre, Detroit 48212.
- LWV National Convention – June 28 – July 1 at the Hilton Chicago in Chicago. More information on our website at www.lwvdetroit.org. All members are welcome to attend the convention.
- **NO Membership Meeting in July and August!**

News from the Detroit League President

The following is an “elevator speech” (20 to 40 seconds) you can use to tell people about the LWV.

“We are a non-partisan political organization with national, state and local components. For nearly a century we have worked to empower voters by informing citizens about local candidates, public policy and advocacy programs.

We encourage active participation in the political process. We conduct candidate forums, register voters, hold informational meetings and advocate for voter rights. Join because you can be a force for change for your community, yourself and your country.” Rhonda Craig

Do You Know Your Government?

At the May membership meeting, Mary Coconougher, one of our members, gave a very informative presentation about the role and responsibilities of precinct delegates. Mary had served as a **precinct delegate** for approximately 30 years.

Most of us at the meeting new little about what precinct delegates are and what they do.

Mary shared the following information:

- Precinct Delegates are identified in the State Constitution which provides for the election of precinct delegates in each of the qualified political parties to participate in the statewide primary.
- Each political party has its own unique way of viewing the role and responsibilities of precinct delegates.
- The Precinct Delegate represents the local grass roots political unit.
- The delegate roles and responsibilities require the following:
 1. Support the his/her political party's candidates and to provide information about the delegate's community to the party and to the community from the party.
 2. Be a register voter.
 3. Live in the district.
 4. Be informed about the precinct.
 5. Canvass community to register voters (big responsibility).
- The number of delegates in a precinct is determined by the total number of voters who cast votes for a candidate for President or the Secretary of State in the last general November election.
- A precinct delegate is elected each even year.
- You can find out who are your precinct delegates by contacting the Wayne County Clerk's website at www.waynecounty.com/elected/clerk or calling 313-224-5525.

To Contact Us

**Find us and friend us on
Face Book and on our new website
at www.lwvdetroit.org!**



A Brief History of the League of Women Voters of Detroit from 1950's – 1060's – As Lived it by Kathleen Strauss

The League in Detroit was active in the 1950's and 1960's. We had over 500 members and were organized in neighborhood units where we could learn about and discuss issues before reaching consensus. Voter's Services was a major citywide activity with Voter Guides being produced in tabloid sized newspaper format. They were distributed to public libraries, churches, synagogues, etc. This was, of course, pre-internet. In the early 60's we produced it in the Detroit News. Our Voter Services Chair edited it along with the Detroit News editor. It was published as part of the Detroit News. Of course, in that way it reached thousands more readers than the League alone could reach.

In 1961 (in cooperation with WWJ-Channel 4- The Detroit News channel) the League held its Candidate Forum for what was then the Detroit Common Council on live television. Almost all 18 candidates participated. There was general agreement following the election that the results were greatly influenced by the candidate performance at that Forum.

During the late 50's and early 60's the League continued to deal with Federal and State issues in addition to Detroit's. At the state level the major issue was the calling of a Constitutional Convention to revise the State Constitution for the first time in many years. League members in cooperation with what was then the Junior Chamber of Commerce (the Jaycees) circulated petitions to put the question on the ballot. The petition circulators, all volunteers, gathered sufficient number of signatures to put the issue on the ballot. The voters approved the calling of the Convention which was held in 1961-1962. The League endorsed the product of the Convention and the voters approved it. It is that document (with some key amendments also approved by the voters) that we are governed by today.

In 1963 & 1964 the League produced a weekly television program on Channel 4 (WWJ) called the Town Meeting on the Air before a live audience. It was hosted by Ven Marshall, a Channel 4 News Anchor, the League President and me. The Program debuted with W. Averill Harriman who had just returned from the Soviet Union where he had negotiated the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. This was his first public appearance after having done so. Some of the other program guests (all of whom were secured by the League) were John Kenneth Galbraith, William Buckley and the Ambassador from South Vietnam to the United States.

Then there was the day to remember. In October 1963 the League held a public meeting at the Rackham Building (across for the Detroit Institute of Arts) on Foreign Policy. The speakers were U.S. State Department Officials. We were taken aback when their aides began coming on stage and whispering in their ears. To our shock and horror, the main speaker interrupted the program to announce the terrible news that President Kennedy had been shot while on a visit to Texas.

In the late 90’s and early 2000’s an infusion of new members favored the ward system for election of members of Detroit City Council. All Council members were then elected at large, a system which the League had previously supported. However, the League then endorsed a system under which seven of the nine members were elected from wards (districts) and the remaining two would be elected at large. The league was active in the campaign to adopt that system which was approved by the voters and remains in effect to this day.

Once the goal was achieved it appears many members lost interest in the League with the result it no longer remained active until more recently. It is good to see the League revitalized by the influx of new members who see, as I do, that its mission is more critical today than ever before. Issues that continue to need addressing are support of public education (we have been and still are strong advocates of traditional public schools), clean water, clean air, balancing individual liberty with security and other issues all of which the League traditionally deals with by research and study and finding consensus before taking a position.

Kathleen Straus

March 18, 201

Candidates Forums (more information coming)

- June 7, 2018 – U.S. House Seat, 13th District, 5:30pm-8:30pm, Barth Hall
RSVP required at kelly@citizendetroit.org or call 313-334-3131.
- June 28, 2018 – U.S. Senate Seat, Michigan - Mark your calendar
- July 12, 2018 – Michigan State House – Detroit, Highland Park, Hamtramck
- July 24, 2018 – Wayne County Executive and County Commissioners

TAKE THE 10-5-1 PLEDGE – AS PROMOTED BY THE DETROIT FREE PRESS

To encourage people to vote in the Primary, August 7th!

- 1. By July 1 – Send emails to those who you think might not be voting in the Primary to encourage them to join you at the polls August 7th.**
- 2. By August 1 – Call those you sent post cards to and encourage them again to vote August 7th.**
- 3. By August 7th - Make sure one of those contacted get to the polls, taking the person to his/her poll.**

We cannot wait until the Nov. General Election to assure that the candidates who we believe to best represent us are able to run in the General Election!

The League of Women Voters encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government; works to increase understanding of major public policy issues; and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League is strictly nonpartisan meaning we neither endorse nor oppose candidates or political parties. Membership is open to men and women that are of at least 16 years of age.