



Time to Renew Your LEAGUE Membership

If you have been a member prior to Jan. 31st, 2018, your Membership needs to be renewed. Increasing expenses have required an increase in membership dues to \$70 for an individual, \$105 for household (two people at the same address), and for this year, no payment required for current students, 16 and older. You can renew on line at lwvmi.org, or get an application on-line at www.lwvdetroit.org and mail it in, or contact Cheryl Bukoff, Detroit League Membership Coordinator at cbukoff@sbcglobal.net. Our fiscal year begins in July.



Coffee and Conversations

Metropolitan United Methodist Church in Detroit hosted a conversation with the parishioners and neighborhood community about their concerns, question, and ideas regarding voter access, voter rights, and voter education. Mary Laverne Jackson, member of both the Church and the League did a great job along with the United Methodist Women's group at the Church in arranging for this wonderful event. 28 people attended including 4 League members. Robust conversation ensued, resulting in some interesting ideas to strengthen the voting process such as having a watch dog role to monitor voting rights and access, establish a multiple day voting, and getting election information to absentee voters earlier. Ballot proposals were discussed as well.

We welcome requests from other sites such as churches, libraries, etc. for opportunities to talk with the community. Contact Cheryl Bukoff, Membership Coordinator, with ideas.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS DETROIT

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2018 ISSUE

August and September Schedule of Activities

- **NO Membership Meeting in August!**
- **August 7th – PRIMARY ELECTION**
- **September 1st – Detroit League Garage sale.** It will be held at Deborah Bunkley's House in Hamtramck. More information to follow.
- **September 15th Membership meeting** – location to be decided.

League Election News and Notification

We will be conducting an election for several positions on the Detroit Board at our next membership meeting, September 15th. The Nominating Committee, Gerry Barrons and Valerie Ash, has asked Rhonda Craig, our current President to run for a second term and she has graciously agreed. In addition, the Nominating Committee is working to nominate members for the positions of secretary and 2 members at large. Any member can nominate themselves or others. The Nominating Committee will send out within a week the current election slate for consideration. Please send additional nominations to Gerry at gerbarrons2@att.net by Aug.11th

Primary Ballot Issue for Detroit voters – To vote on Whether or not to Revise The City Charter.

Citizen Detroit, with whom the League has partnered on candidate forums this summer, has an excellent report on this ballot proposal. Go to www.citizendetroit.org. Click on Events and Workbooks, and under the July 12th program, click on the City Charter Workbook for information.

Also a reminder, go to www.vote411.org for a personalized Voter Guide by the League and [to our facebook page](#) to see a video of the Wayne County Commissioners Forum.



What Happened at the National Convention Won't Stay There!

We were very lucky to be represented at the League of Women Voters National Convention by the President of our League, Rhonda Craig, our Treasurer, Susan Slattery, and Deborah Bunkley, Voter Services Coordinator and State Board member. Here are some of their thoughts!

By Rhonda

The League of Women Voters USA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

LWV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

Insights from the Convention

What an amazing experience. The LWV convention of 2018 was over 900 members strong. I was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm, excitement and the energy in the room. The dedication to education and voter participation and in short, Making Democracy Work, was inspiring. But I was also hit by the enormity of the task. Although everyone wants to Make Democracy Work we need workers to produce results. While enthusiasm and dedication are important, too few are on the battlefield. The author, Elaine Weiss spoke to us about her book, The Woman's Hour, which told the story about the work to ratify the 19th amendment, which granted women the right to vote. Women in the fight saw the struggle as a war. I believe that is how we should view our work. We are soldiers and we are fighting an enemy who has several names: ignorance, apathy and intolerance. These are enemies of our democracy. Looking at this as a war, would account for the passion my fellow LWV conventioners exhibited.

Proposed Detroit LWV Diversity Statement

A part of being in a war is having a strong, cohesive army. An effective army is not only committed but united. Therefore, we cannot afford to alienate our fellow soldiers.

To this end I propose as a part of The Detroit LWV mission statement to include not only the national LWV diversity policy but to include the following, to wit:

"We, Detroit LWV, believe that democracy cannot truly exist without inclusion of all nationalities, races, genders, cultures, ages, religions and sexual orientation. We cannot afford to exclude and not utilize the tremendous talents and experience of the diverse backgrounds that have come to the American shores. We as soldiers, in the fight for democracy invite, encourage and promote participation in our league of ALL people. Inclusion makes for a strong army and a healthier community. We are ALL in this together."

By Susan

June 28th through July 1st was the first National League of Women Voter's convention that I had ever attended. For those of you have not gone, yet, it is quite a process. Workshop, caucuses and information sessions started as early as 7:30 am and going as late as 9:30 pm, kept every attendee busy. There were over 50 delegates from Michigan and it was fun networking and meeting our state officers as well as delegates from as far away as the UP.

Much of the day was spent in plenary sessions where everyone attends and we discuss and vote on items of business as well as listening to very interesting speakers.

League adopted the following program for 2018-2020: The Campaign for Making Democracy Work-includes ensuring a free, fair and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters by focusing on:

- Voting rights
- Improving Elections
- Campaign Finance and Money in Politics
- Redistricting

Adopted by amendment, sponsored by 2 Michigan leagues, that "LWVUS elevates the ratification of the ERA as a national priority this year and every year until the ERA is ratified and becomes a US Constitutional Amendment"; this is the language we voted on and it was passed.

Many of you may know, but I confess I did not, we were 2 states short of ratification. Illinois recently ratified, so now we need one more state and I think that North Carolina is the state the league thinks is our best bet for this. There is also a bill in both houses of Congress which will eliminate the time restriction that was put into the ratification process. That time has elapsed, so we need these bills to keep the amendment alive. Many people I spoke with since the convention thought this had already passed. Not yet I say.

I hope to attend the 2020 convention in Washington DC which will celebrate 100 years!

Deborah's account

The National Convention for the League of women voters; it was a life changing event.
The Hilton Hotel accommodations exceeded my expectations.

The Networking with as many members that I could get the attention of was the most rewarding. I also appreciated finally having real informative conversations.

Another surprising but rewarding part of the convention was the national LWV deliberate attempt to educate the leagues body of delegates with the importance of diversity. I had some great conversations about the importance to make in all attempts that the LWV is a reflection of the community it supports.

In conclusion, it was great having conversations with the Michigan delegates from all over the state, we were 50 delegates strong and the discussions were really engaging.