

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *DETROIT*



JULY 2019 ISSUE

Membership Renewal!

Its that time of year. I know it seems like we just renewed, but we were not keeping up with our schedule.

The fiscal year and thus our membership year begin July 1st of each year and ends in June the next year. This year, we are trying to be proactive and request that you renew this July or soon after.

For the first time you will renew directly with LWV Detroit. You can do this on line at www.lwvdetroit.org or can send in a check (get an application from our website) in the mail at LWV of Detroit, P.O. Box 2503, Detroit MI 48202.

Good News! We have lowered the dues to \$60 for one member and \$90 for 2 in a household!

Students are still free for another year!

Announcement!

There will **not** be a LWV Detroit Membership Meeting in July and August due to increasing election related activities.

See you in September!

JULY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

- **July 11th Hamtramck City Council Candidate Forum** will be held, 6:00-8:00 pm at the *Hamtramck Public Library*, 2360 Caniff St., Hamtramck, MI 48212. For more information, go on-line at www.lwv.org.
- **July 30th Highland Park Mayoral Candidates Forum**, 6:00 – 8:00 pm, *Faith Tabernacle Church*, 16548 Hamilton Ave., Highland Park, MI 48203. For more information, go on-line at www.lwv.org.
- **July 30th, Moderator Training for League forums**
6 pm at Christ Episcopal Church, 120 N. Military, Dearborn 48124. Rhonda Craig, Tera Moon, and Judy Florian will be the trainers. This started out as a one-on-one training but we learned that others are interested, so we are inviting area leagues. There is limited space in this room (1st floor lounge), so please RSVP by July 16 to me (betsy.cushman@gmail.com). Thanks!

June 22, 2019 Annual Meeting LWV Detroit

- 1) **19 attended the Annual Meeting** of the Detroit League and we gained 3 new members and 7 renewals at the meeting!
- 2) The following **were elected for Board for two years and Nominating Committee positions for one year:**
 - Treasure – Susan Slattery
 - Secretary – Jennifer Goossan
 - Voter Services – Joyce Dallas
 - Membership – Cheryl Bukoff
 - Member at Large – Deborah Bunkley
 - Nominating Committee – Gerry Barrons, chair and Valerie Ash, memberWe thank Deborah Bunkley, former Voter Service Coordinator and Joanna Spencer, former Nominating Committee Member for their commitment and hard work!
- 3) **Changes in our by-laws** was voted on and approved. There were minor changes made that were initiated due to the changes in our status as an independent League.
- 4) **The Diversity Statement** proposed by Rhonda Craig was approved. The Diversity Statement proposed by Rhonda Craig was approved.

In addition to the National League of Women Voters Diversity Statement: *“We, Detroit League of Women Voters, believe that democracy cannot truly exist without inclusion of all races, nationalities, genders, disabilities, 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 advocates, 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.”*

Rhonda Craig, President

Oh what an inspiring State Convention! This year the Convention presented attorneys that spoke about our gerrymandering lawsuit, the implications of lame duck laws and what can be done to curb them. We were treated to a number of informative workshops which provided essential information to local leagues.

The banquet hosted author Elaine Weiss who wrote "The Woman's Hour" a book about the final push to get the 19th Amendment passed, giving women the right to vote. We also had a wonderful breakfast with Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib. I am pleased and proud to have witnessed a presentation and history lesson by our own member Kathleen Strauss who recounted entertaining and fascinating stories about our league.

I am also proud to announce that four of our members received Belle Ringer awards for their work and dedication to our league. They are Susan Slattery, Sara Weertz, Missy Durante and Gerry Barrons. We must all be thankful to these individuals for their contributions to our work.

Susan Slattery, Treasure

This was my second time attending a LWV convention; it was fun to catch up with other Leaguers that I met at the national convention last year, yes from different leagues in Michigan. There were several highlights for me: the first was the update from our attorneys on our lawsuit against the state for gerrymandering. This was held Friday afternoon and, basically, we are in holding pattern waiting for the Supreme Court to decide the gerrymandering cases that are now before it. I'm sure we will hear more shortly from the state on this.

One of the workshops that I attended that is near and dear to my heart was on the passage of the ERA Amendment. This was both very interesting and discouraging. I didn't know that this amendment was first introduced in Congress in 1923 didn't get very far but was reintroduced by Martha Griffiths (from Michigan, remember her) in 1971. We are only one state away from ratification and interesting to me is that the same states that wouldn't ratify a women's right to vote (19th Amendment) are the same states dragging their feet on this amendment.

Next year is the national convention which will be held in Washington DC, I hope you all consider going as it's a great experience.

Deborah Bunkley, Member At Large State and Detroit Board Member

Mrs. Kathleen Straus managed to totally captivate the entire audience, covering the early years of her membership with the League and her presidency in 1960-63, and sharing personal as well as professional experiences and relationships. She was part of a panel which included a state historian who wrote a book about the League and included State Board President, Judy Karandjeff. Judy even mentioned memories of Kathleen when they both worked in the Michigan State Capital. Kathleen shared her extensive memory, of the events that show the strength of women, especially

during the early 60's when women were too often recognized through their husbands' positions and names and not as independent strong leaders as were the League members. That is just how it was for women in the early 1960's, according to Kathleen. She just moved forward and later joined the State Board of Education, encouraged through her work with the late Mayor, Jerome Cavanagh. She retired at the age of 92 from the State Board of Education and remains a jewel in the community where she continues to support and participate in the functions of the LWV Detroit. Members might find it interesting to check out the historical

papers for the Detroit League of Women Voters located in the Bentley collection, in the main library which were placed there by Kathleen after her term as President ended.

Joyce Dallas, Voter Services Coordinator

The LWVMI Convention in Livonia May 17-19 was my first League convention. As a relatively new member, I found the workshops on voter services and engaging members very helpful. Although I was not a voting delegate, the plenaries gave me a lot of insight into the issues, policies and the workings of the organization. I especially enjoyed meeting members from around the state. I was able to spend some time with the Grosse Pointe and Suttons Bay chapter delegations. Having vacationed in Suttons Bay, up in the Leelanau Peninsula, it was really great to learn that there is such an active and dedicated LWV chapter there.



Thank you to three of our members for donations to the silent auction at the State Convention to raise money for the State League coffers! All had at least 3 bids or more.

- **Valerie Ash and John Krieger** donated a wonderful picnic basket that had lots of goodies.
- **Harriet Saperstein** donated a tour of Detroit's development, problems and opportunities "Polka Dots and Prairies" with lunch at the DIA. Harriet, a life time Detroit member, could not attend the conference because she was also being honored that weekend by Jewish Senior Life with the Eight over 80s Tikkun Olam Award for Repairing the World. Congratulations, Harriet!
- **Deborah Bunkley** donated a bottle of expensive champagne which had its own special auction.

We have a new that represent Detroit,

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heading of Election and Voter Information. The guide was updated and revised by Margaret Filatrault. We appreciate her terrific work in creating this easy to use guide! Please feel free to make copies or share the web site with friends, families, community.

Voter Services – Voter Registration at various locations – email Joyce Dallas to sign up at joymdallas@sbcglobal.net.

Membership Committee – Help us reach out to our diverse community to invite to be members – email Cheryl Bukoff at cbukoff@sbcglobal.net.

Candidate Forum Committee – Help at various candidate forums this summer and fall – email Rhonda Craig at Rhondacraigesq@yahoo.com.

Fundraising Committee – Join the Committee that makes sure we can cover our budget! email Helena Scott at helena.scott@gmail.com.

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.