

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *DETROIT*



JULY AUGUST 2020 ISSUE

Announcement!

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

See you in September!

FUN FACTS: Annual Meeting trivia game:

1. When were men invited to join LWV? Answer: 1973
2. Who wrote the exact language eventually adopted as the 19th amendment? Answer: Susan B. Anthony
3. Who were the LWV-D women who were either on the local or state boards or active members of the league who were inducted in the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame? Answer: Kathleen Strauss, Martha Griffith, Della Goodwin, Maryann Mahaffey.
4. Does membership require that one be a citizen? Answer: No.

Mildred Shepherd had the most correct votes and won a \$20 Visa gift card.

LWV Detroit Annual Meeting - June 20, 2020

President Rhonda Craig opened the annual meeting of the League of Women Voters-Detroit (LWV-D) with 17 members in attendance via Zoom or telephone. She accepted a gift of flowers in recognition of her work as President and in



celebration of surviving Covid-19

SPECIAL GUEST: Rhonda introduced Paula Bowman, LWV-MI Board member, LWV-Northwestern Wayne County President, and LWV-D mentor. Paula reported on the many ongoing LWV activities and noted that LWV has great name recognition and respect among nonprofit groups and the public. Paula briefly highlighted events scheduled for the upcoming convention and some of the items on which convention delegates will be voting.

ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS: Gerry Barrons presented and summarized the screen-shared slate on behalf of the Nominating Committee (Gerry, Valerie Ash, and Deborah Bunkley). Joyce Dallas recently resigned as Voter Services Coordinator and was thanked for her service. The following were elected unanimously for two years:

President: Rhonda Craig
Director-at-Large: Mary Laverne Jackson
Director-at-Large: Stephanie Simon
Secretary: Kathe Stevens

PRESENTATION: President Rhonda Craig narrated a screen-shared slideshow on *African American Women in The Suffragette Movement*. Rhonda was thanked for her research on this timely topic.

Committee Reports:

TREASURER'S AND FUNDRAISING REPORT: Susan Slattery reported on the final expenses for this fiscal year and on the budget for next year which was approved. A projected fundraiser for this year was postponed until next year due to the pandemic.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Cheryl Bukoff reported LWV-D currently has 88 members.

VOTER SERVICES REPORT: No report presented due to the resignation of Joyce Dallas. George Cook, Voter Services Committee Member has agreed to temporarily coordinate the Voter Services requests.

2020 Convention Newsletter Article – Rhonda Craig, President

Well the 2020 National League of Women Voters Convention was an event with many firsts and a novel experience to say the least! This year marks the 100th anniversary of the women's right to vote. It also marks the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters.

This is an unprecedented milestone. It was unfortunate of course that our country is going through a pandemic. This necessitated many changes in the way the convention was held. Despite the changes, the convention was an exciting and a rewarding experience. There were many caucuses prior to the convention which provided a wealth of information for local leagues. In addition, there was a pre-Convention session which was particularly interesting. The meetings were virtual, and we had many speakers from around the world. We were treated to many short speeches and accolades from elected officials and celebrities congratulating the League about our anniversary and our accomplishments. One inspirational story from one of our members was about a woman who wanted to make a difference even though she had limited circumstances. The woman wanted to register newly naturalized citizens. She would go to the courthouse where the ceremony was held. She would take her registration forms, pens and her ironing board and set up in the hallway. I was struck with how creative, innovative, dedicated and determined she was to make a difference.

The plenary sessions on Friday and Saturday were informative and accomplished some much-needed work. Although the convention was marred by some technical issues and there were some participants who were not able to successfully navigate in the virtual arena, I believe that we all left the convention with a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm. A very memorable experience. I would invite all members to check out the national website for the wealth of information, videos and other materials generated by the convention at LWVUS.

Reflections on LMWVUS Convention - Deborah Bunkley, State & Det. Bd. Member

Panelists on the First Night of the Convention

- Muriel Bower, Current Mayor of Washington DC (By coincidence the House of Representatives voted on the Constitution to make Wash DC a state)
- Alejandra Castillo, YWCA Defenders of Democracy
- Allison Riggs, Southern Coalition for Social Justice
- Valerie Jared, former staffer of Barack Obama "When we all Vote"

Points made:

Change the culture for new and upcoming voters, meet people where they are and educate them, by any means necessary.

- Make voting a big deal, especially when voting for the first time. It is a memory that will never be forgotten.
- Engage the voters; what are their issues? What do they care about? What immediately affects their lives?
- Family registration - This is a generation issue, what about the religious groups that do not register - Jehovah witnesses, the William sisters, tennis heroes!
- Informed voters: Primary/General elections, local, state and federal elections. School boards, drain commissioners, mayor, city council members...etc.
- Early voting, absentee voting any and every way possible that makes it easy to vote.

Participation:

This National convention was exceptional in many ways; first by the fact it will go down in history as the first virtual convention. Especially since it was the 100th anniversary, lots of celebrations would have been happening all around the Washington DC area. The committee that put this convention together exceeded all my expectations. The control and navigation of this convention was exceptional, and Chris Carson should be proud of the work that her committee did, especially with those of us who were worried about being able to participate due to the challenges of the computer. It was easy, even with the hand raising issues.

My only slight disappointment was the Keynote speaker, Noah O'Donnell. Her speech was excellent but I just wanted more than what she gave for this milestone convention. The new president, Dr. Deborah Turner, stepped right in for Chris and she is ready and able to take the National LWVUS to another level and speech was exceptional. This is also the perfect timing to have a woman of color taking over this leadership. P.2



Events in July and August

July – Access pre-recorded Candidate Forums on our website, lwvdetroit.org. The recorded forums and videos can also be viewed on the LWVDetroit.org website by using the following link:
<https://lwvdetroit.org/town-hall-forums/>

Michigan House of Representatives Races

- **State Representative District 2**
- Grosse Pointe and Detroit

- **State Representative District 10**
- North Western Wayne and Detroit

Virtual Candidate Meet and Greet 2 minute videos

We continue to update candidate's 2 minute "meet and greet" videos on our website.

Remember to check out Vote411.org for a personalized nonpartisan voting guide.

Current Volunteer Opportunities (to volunteer, contact lwvdetroit@gmail.org)

- 1) **Elections for Resident Councils – July 25-27.** As a part of our fundraising efforts the LWV Detroit holds elections in Senior Apartment buildings in Inkster for the Resident's Councils. We need 2 -4 volunteers to help at each of the 4 building elections to pass out ballots, check IDs, help those who need assistance in filling out the ballot and tabulating the results. Elections: July 25 and 26 during the evening, July 27 during the day and July 27 in the evening. Please contact Rhonda Craig at rhondacraigsq@yahoo.com if you can help with one or more election. Each election will require 4 hours of time plus a bit more to count the ballots at the end of the day.
- 2) **Voter Registration to engage** Rock Central (part of Bedrock and Rock Financial) employees. Dates and volunteers needed will be determined soon.
- 3) **Pizza Restaurant Event at :** [Michigan & Trumbull Pizza](#) offered to host a voter registration event August 3rd from 4-7 PM. All who stop by get a pizza slice! Based on the turnout, Michigan & Trumbull might plan future events.
- 4) **We will be doing Voter registration and engagement** using the Voter Activation Network phone/email/text system to share voter information in selected Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park neighborhoods with low voter turnout. More information will be available shortly regarding when this work will begin and volunteers recruited.

THE DETROIT DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS IS HIRING

The City of Detroit is hiring individuals to work during the two upcoming elections on August 4 and November 3. There is a great need for more applicants.

To apply to be a precinct inspector, individuals:

- Should be registered to vote in Michigan
- Should be 18 years or older (individuals age 16 & 17 also may apply)
- Cannot be a challenger, candidate, member of a candidate's immediate family, or a member of the local Board of Canvassers
- Cannot be convicted of a felony or an election crime

To apply, go online to detroitmi.gov/employment. For additional information, call (313) 876-0231 or (313) 876-0230. p.3



Joyce Dallas, Voter Services Coordinator, resigned her position on the League Board due to work responsibilities. She has done a wonderful job, developing a committed volunteer committee, training a number of volunteers for voter registration, arranging for various registration locations, and doing many extra things like providing follow up contact and engagement with League volunteers and representing the Detroit League at community meetings. George Cook, one of her committee members, has agreed to temporarily take on the role until someone can be found to carry out the rest of her term (one year). We miss Joyce, her work to represent us so ably in the community and her true passion for voter registration and voter access. We look forward to her involvement when she has time. If you have an interest in the Board position of Voter Services Coordinator, please contact Gerry Barron, Nominating Chair, at gerbarrons2@att.net.



New Member and New Volunteer Orientation – July 25th, 10:30 am -12:00 pm

Join us by Zoom or on the phone. Learn more about the League of Women Voters Detroit, its mission, the goals, activities, and volunteer roles. Meet the League's Board members, share your interests in the activities of the League, tell us what you think will help to prepare voters for the upcoming election.

If you are interest in attending, please RSVP at lwvdetroit@gmail.com or call 313-288-9590. A link to the orientation will be sent the week prior to the session. All members are welcome.



Membership Renewal time! The League's fiscal/membership year is July 1st to June 30th.

Our membership rates have not changed from last year. They include \$60 for one person and \$90 for a two-person membership household. Student membership continues to be free. A reduced fee membership fee can be requested.

There are two ways to renew. **One** is using the paper application that I will be sending out in the mail to each person who membership needs renewal at this time. The check can be made out to LWVDetroit. There will be a second way to renew, shortly. Our website is being redesigned to accept on-line applications and credit cards but this change is not completed yet. You will be informed when this opportunity for on-line application is available.

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.