



The VOTER

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

President's Message

Friends and Colleagues,

What can I say? The 2023 LWVMI Convention this past May was the best. Treasurer Susan Slattery and I arrived in East Lansing on Friday around 2 pm to an empty Capitol...no state representatives, no state senators, only groups of elementary students. But what an impressive building; I could feel the history in my bones.



Susan and I set up the Detroit League history boards. If you don't know what I'm talking about, these are a series of poster boards that illustrate the LWV Detroit timeline from its inception in 1919 (before women got the right to vote) to the present. As the first League in Michigan, the growth of LWV Detroit spurred the development of other Leagues throughout the state. Today, MI boasts 33 local Leagues, so our history boards depict the beginnings of LWVMI. Needless to say, our display was a big hit with Convention attendees.

The presentation of our history also captured the eye of Virginia Kase Solomon, CEO of the National League of Women Voters. Virginia was the Convention guest speaker on Friday night. What an honor it was to have her sit with members of the Detroit League during the Sunday plenary.

Nine members represented LWV Detroit during the Convention, acting as voting delegates and attending workshops. I participated in a workshop on Gun Safety Laws with guest speaker, Laura Seewald MD, from the Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention at the University of Michigan. Dr. Seewald shared evidence-based research about firearm violence in America, and we talked about LWV Detroit grant opportunities specific to gun safety in Hamtramck and Highland Park.

LWVMI Advocacy Committee VP Judy Karandjeff (Lansing) and LWVMI Nominating Committee Chair Sue Smith (Washtenaw) kept a packed room totally engaged when presenting their brilliant workshop on the National Popular Vote. Since the Convention, I understand a state House committee voted on a bill to add Michigan to a compact of states that would automatically cast their presidential elector votes for the national popular vote winner. To read more about the National Popular Vote, click [HERE](#).

I could go on and on about Saturday's fabulous guest speaker, Attorney Mark Brewer, whose passion and commitment to the League reverberated throughout the hall, or about Sunday's guest speaker, State Representative (and young professional) Penelope Tsernoglou's refreshing update on our state government, but I have to be fair. Further in this issue, you can read more about the Convention from some of our other delegates.

Let me end by saying that participants conversed and networked throughout the Convention, made friends, caught up with old acquaintances, and just had fun. Bravo to LWVMI Convention organizers!

Deborah Bunkley
President, League of Women Voters of Detroit

Photo Insert: Wayne State University voter registration (R to L) □ Deborah Bunkley (me!), Joanne Spencer, Susan Slattery, Cheryl Bukoff, and the late Mary Cocanougher.

June Events



What's Next for the Proposals Passed Last November? **June 13, 2023 @ 6pm**

Join the Detroit Public Library and the Detroit League for the next forum in their collaborative series on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at 6 pm for a presentation on *What's Next for the Proposals Passed Last November?*

Even with three ballot proposals winning the support of Michigan voters, if legislative efforts to implement them stall, there could be difficulties and roadblocks ahead.

This informative presentation and discussion with [Eric Walcott](#) of MSU Extension will explore the issues from last November's ballot as the political landscape shifts.

To register for this event, click the purple button below. A Zoom link will be sent to all registrants before the program.

Brought to you by the Detroit League and the Detroit Public Library, partnering in talks promoting voter education and tools for action.

Image created by Ruth Koelwyn.

Register Here

LWVD Annual Membership Meeting

□ **June 17, 2023 @ 10am**

Please join LWV Detroit for its year-end Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, June 17, from 10 to 11:30 am. Our guest speaker will be [Rana Faraj](#), [Hamtramck City Clerk](#). League members will discuss and vote on recent updates to the LWVD Bylaws. We will also elect the 2023-2025 slate of board members and discuss the Detroit League's action plan for 2023-2024.



THIS MEETING WILL BE HYBRID. We will meet in person at the home of LWVD Secretary Rhonda Craig (19000 Wildemere, Detroit, MI 48221). We will also broadcast the meeting on Zoom. Members will receive the meeting link and agenda before the event.

You need not be a member to attend our membership meetings. You can participate in person or ask for the Zoom link by contacting our Membership Chair, Cheryl Bukoff at 313-288-9095 or lwwdetroit@gmail.com.

Nominating Committee



2023-2025 LWVD Slate

We are pleased to send you the Detroit League of Women Voters slate of officers and directors for 2023-2025.

This ballot will be sent to the membership before the Annual Membership Meeting when members vote on the new slate.

In accordance with the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Detroit, the Nominating Committee nominates the following members to the Board of Directors 2023-2025:

Co-Presidents: Deborah Bunkley + Sara Weertz

Preside at all meetings; identify policy or governance issues for discussion; speak for the League orally or in writing; represent the Detroit League at state and national meetings.

Voter Services Coordinator: Timothy Martin

Develop a strategy for voter registration; coordinate voter education events, including candidate forums; distribute voter education materials.

Treasurer: Kim Garland

Develop budget in coordination with leadership; maintain League funds; process dues payments.

Membership Coordinator: Esha Price

Promoter for the League; encourage leadership team/members to build the League; develop plans to recruit new members.

Director at Large: Elois Moore

Director at Large: Susan Slattery

Director at Large: LaWonna Washington

Current Board Members serving 2022-2024:

Secretary: Rhonda Craig

Record and maintain the minutes of League meetings.

Director-at-Large: Anne Parker

2023-2024 Nominating Committee: Geraldine Barrons, Valerie Ash and...

At the first Board meeting after the Annual Meeting, a third Nominating Committee member will be chosen by the Board representing the Board.

From the Nominating Committee,

Valerie Ash, Gerry Barrons & Deborah Bunkley

Alone we do so little; together, we can do so much. Helen Keller

Voter Services

Last month, the Detroit League had several voter services events.

A heartfelt thank you to LWVD Board Director at Large, Anne Parker, for helping to host a voter registration table at Southeastern High School (Detroit) where 19 students registered to vote.



I appreciate our League's partnership with the Tau Alpha Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority whose members assisted with a voter registration drive at Lee M. Thurston High School (Redford) where 49 students registered to vote.

I am also grateful for LWVD volunteers, Betty Burdette, George Cook, and Laura Isom, who staffed several voter registration drives at U.S. citizenship

and naturalization ceremonies in the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse in downtown Detroit. Each ceremony welcomes 60 to 70 new citizens. On average, this voter services trio registers 75% of the new citizens and plants a seed in the remaining.

In June, we have two voter services events:

1. Saturday, June 17, 2023 voter registration at **Oak Grove A.M.E. Church** (19801 Cherrylawn Ave, Detroit, MI 48221) for a Juneteenth Pancake Breakfast beginning at 9am.
2. Monday, June 19, 2023 voter registration and education at the **Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History** during their annual Juneteenth Festival.

Please get in touch with me if you want to participate in any voter services events (313-288-9095 or lwwdetroit@gmail.com). We welcome all volunteers.

Tim Martin
Voter Services Coordinator

LWVMI Convention Delegate Summaries

From LWVD Member Charles Thomas, Jr.:

Many thanks to LWVMI for a first-rate experience at the May Convention. I'm grateful to the Detroit League for making the experience possible. Although I was present for only one day of the Convention, it was packed from morning to night. I enjoyed hanging out with my fellow Detroit members such a cool bunch. Our League was well represented, not only in numbers but also in our history, validated through LWVD's multi-tri-fold posterboards telling the story of the Detroit League. The posterboards were roundly lauded and applauded.

The Convention was a reunion of sorts enabling me to see members from other local Leagues, some of whom I had only seen on Zoom, and others like Judy Florian, VP of Voter Services, and Flint League President Pegge Adams, whom I have worked with in the past, but have not seen in a while. I also met members from other Leagues, and we had a chance to discuss future collaborative opportunities. The fellowship was fantastic.

I attended a workshop entitled *Engagement in Minority Communities* with an excellent panel and honest dialogue on what local Leagues can do to build and improve relations and partnerships within communities of color.

The second workshop I attended was on *Censorship*. This was a far broader topic, and my only regret was the limited time to fully develop an *effective* response to what I believe is critical to the survival of a democracy: the ability to engage in civil

and reasonable discourse.

My Convention experience ended with an informative presentation and an open Q&A session with Attorney Mark Brewer.

For me, the LWVMI Convention was good food, fellowship, and information. I am a better person for having had the experience.

From LWVD Treasurer Susan Slattery:

This was my third LWVMI Convention and another great experience Friday evening thru late Sunday morning. I networked with other local Leagues and attended workshops, but one of the most interesting events occurred at a plenary session (and these are not usually interesting). The Macomb County State Unit presented a motion to support a non-recommended program item to approve a new study on the Right to Die (or assisted suicide),

Some from our League may recall that when we reviewed the state and national programs earlier this year, LWVMI did not accept our program suggestions. It was the same for the Macomb County State Unit and their Right to Die study, so they went one step further, asking Convention delegates to consider the program addition.

After a meaningful pro/con discussion from the delegation, all the delegates voted on Sunday morning. The final tally was close (less than ten votes), but the motion failed due to limited resources for a study of this magnitude during the 2024 election year. Based on the vote margin, this issue will return, possibly as a concurrence with another state League such as Oregon.

From LWVD Board Director at Large, Elois Moore:

My granddaughter and I had the privilege of attending the LWVMI Convention as delegates for the Detroit League.

The first workshop we attended was a panel discussion on *Engagement in Minority Communities*. The panelists shared ideas on how to build trust by respecting each others' differences, knowing that our goals are the same. The representation of diversity was a plus.

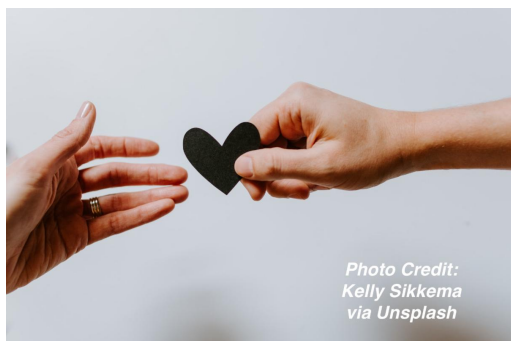
We also attended a workshop on *Censorship* that focused on book banning in schools and libraries and teaching Black History in schools. This forum allowed us to participate in the discussion and role-play. Talking with League members from all over Michigan and sharing our opinions on Censorship highlighted the adage: *If we do not share our history, we will be doomed to repeat it.*

It was a wonderful experience for Cassidy to see what her grandmother has been involved in all these years. She now understands why participating in the governing process is so relevant for people of color.

PS: The food was awesome!

From LWVD Member, Sara Weertz:

The LWVMI Convention was a simultaneous mix of learning, networking, and fun. The plenary sessions (where the League conducts its business) were an educational experience in and of themselves. The guest speakers (one each day!) were motivating. And the workshops expanded on relevant concepts and themes. I attended the *Engagement in Minority Communities*, where panelists offered tips and techniques to reach minority communities throughout the greater Detroit metropolitan area. I also participated in *Create a Campus LWV Unit*, an informative discussion on getting young people eager for advocacy and election information. This was my first LWVMI Convention but not my last.



Interested in Donating?

Thank you in advance for your interest in supporting LWV Detroit. Click the red button below for several ways to donate.

**Give to LWV
Detroit**

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER!

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[League of Women Voters of Detroit.](#)



New Name Same Great Content

Did you catch our new name? The *LWV Detroiter* is now *The VOTER*. This change is more closely related to the League and its mission.

For questions or comments, don't hesitate to contact the Detroit League at lwvdetroit@gmail.com.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization working to protect and expand voting rights and ensure everyone is represented in our democracy. We empower voters and defend democracy through advocacy and education. The League neither endorses nor opposes candidates or political parties. Membership is open to men and women at least 16 years of age.



League of Women Voters of Detroit | P.O. Box 2503, Detroit, MI 48202

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