



# Oakland Voter

The League of Women Voters Oakland Area  
200 S. Washington Ave., Suite 4, Royal Oak, MI 48067  
Phone: 248/548-1097 Fax: 248/548-1306 website: [www.lwvoa.org](http://www.lwvoa.org)  
President: Eva Packard e-mail: [Pres@lwvoa.org](mailto:Pres@lwvoa.org)

2007-2008 Issue 6

April/May 2008



## Lunch and Learn Monday, April 28, 12 to 3 pm

Visitor Center, Heritage Park  
25099 Farmington Rd.  
(between 10 and 11 Mile Roads)  
Farmington Hills 48336



Is it getting hotter? Colder? Drier? This past winter it was hard to tell what was going on, although scientists all tell us that climate changes are coming faster than anticipated.

**Bring your own bag lunch.** Vegetables, fruit and beverages will be provided.

Learn about Global Warming from **Lisa Kamil**, a volunteer for **The Climate Project**. Lisa is a trained presenter for this not-for-profit organization based in Nashville, Tennessee. It focuses on Climate Change education and has volunteers world-wide discussing this issue.

**Tiffany Hartung** of the **Sierra Club of Oakland County** will describe their initiative with local communities to create a greener environment: "All over America, cities, counties and states are launching an exciting grassroots movement to help solve one of our country's most pressing problems: global warming. Communities in Oakland County are taking action to help solve global warming with smart energy solutions that make a real difference. With the encouragement of Sierra Club members and volunteers, more and more cities are signing up to become Cool Cities ([www.coolcities.us](http://www.coolcities.us)). Begun in 2005, the Sierra Club Cool Cities campaign empowers city residents and local leaders to encourage their cities to implement smart energy solutions that save taxpayer dollars and build healthier cities."

MAKE YOUR RESERVATION FOR THIS PROGRAM BY CALLING OUR OFFICE AT 248-548-1097 OR EMAILING THE LEAGUE AT [PRES@LWVOA.ORG](mailto:Pres@LWVOA.ORG) BY APRIL 26.

LWV Detroit Metropolitan Area will host an open forum:

**The Status of the State of Michigan Budget:  
A Look Backward and Forward**  
Featuring a presentation and analysis  
by **Craig Thiel of the Citizens Research Council**

**Saturday, April 26, 10 am-Noon**

Southfield Public Library, 26000 Evergreen Rd., 48076  
(between 10 and 11 Mile Roads)

Members and the Public are invited. Light refreshments to be served.

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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2007-2008

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THE OAKLAND VOTER is the official publication of the League of Women Voters. It is published eight times a year by the LWVOA. Articles and Letters to the Editor, with writer's name, address and phone number may be sent to the LWVOA office.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** by *Eva Packard*

As part of the League's **Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI)**, members are asked to share a part of their personal League experience through National's Storybank to serve as an inspiration to both current and prospective members. Topics suggestions include:

- What motivated you to join the League of Women Voters?
- What does being a League member mean to you?
- How has your work with the League impacted your community?
- How has being a member provided skills/knowledge for career/life?

Below is the story that I have submitted:

"I am an immigrant, coming to the U.S. at the age of 1 from Budapest, Hungary. Growing up, my dad talked about how voting and knowing the issues and candidate positions were important in order to keep this a great country. When I became eligible to vote, I looked around for information on candidates and discovered the League of Women Voters. I also saw that the League took positions on issues and that their views aligned with mine. So I joined.

"I have been a member of several Leagues in the tri-county Detroit area, finding like-minded women in each community who shared my passions on voting and working for good policies. I was involved in studies ranging from China to electing the President and served on Boards as Treasurer and Voter Guide Chair. Retiring early, I became more involved, serving as Vice-president and President.

"The League has enabled me to make a difference, especially in the area of Voter Service. My Oakland Area League serves 60 communities and 27 school districts. We provide Voter Guides for all of them. In the past two years, we held 50 candidate forums for a variety of offices. In 2003, I was instrumental in initiating our website. It enables us to keep our members and the public informed about election information, their government, and the League and its events.

"As a League representative, I've appeared on TV and radio and been quoted in the newspaper. My university honored me with a Headliner Award and the state League with a Leadership in Civic Empowerment Award. **Membership in the League of Women Voters has enabled me to follow through on my dad's citizenship recommendations and help others do so too, know and work with many exceptional individuals, and achieve a great sense of personal fulfillment.**"

I encourage other members to submit a story too. It can be one paragraph or more but no more than 300 words. Go to [www.LWV.org](http://www.LWV.org). Under "For Members", click on Membership Recruitment Initiative. In the right column under Storybank, you can look at the "The League Storybank" to read stories that have been submitted by others or read "About the League's Storybank" for ideas and tips on writing your personal story. Also read Sue Abram's article on the MRI on page 4.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the **Climate Change meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup>** and invite a guest. ( See page 1.) And be on the lookout for the late-April mailer for our **May 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting** which will include a reservation form. See page 4 for a preview on our luncheon speaker. Also note the **LWV DMA meeting on the State Budget on April 26** and the **LWVMI Workshops on May 10<sup>th</sup>**. Check our website for **cable replay** times of our **Town Hall** with Bishop and Dillon to learn what they said about issues. *Eva* [pres@lwvoa.org](mailto:pres@lwvoa.org)

**"As an LWV member, you are a part of an organization where citizens like you are actively engaged in effecting change on the local, state and national level."**

## **FORUMS AND VOTER GUIDES**

**Debra Horner** has sent questionnaires to candidates for School Board in the **Clarkston, Clawson, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Lake Orion, Lamphere, Madison, Oak Park** and **Pontiac School Districts**. **Voter Guides** should be posted on our website [www.LWVOA.org](http://www.LWVOA.org) by **April 8** for the Tuesday, May 6 election. We will also link to the **Clarenceville** Schools Voter Guide being prepared by the LWV of Northwest Wayne County. The other 19 Oakland County school districts have moved their elections to November, with 14 of them holding elections this fall. The **City of Bloomfield Hills** has a May election for City Commission with just two candidates on the ballot for the two available seats.

**Candidate Forums** scheduled for the May elections are as follows:

**Clarkston Schools, Thursday, April 10 ,7 pm, Clarkston Schools Administration Bldg.** (in the Board Room), 6389 Clarkston Rd., Clarkston, MI 48346. The Clarkston PTA District Council is co-sponsoring. **Jerry Burden** is the Coordinator.

**Oak Park Schools, Thursday, April 10, 7 pm, Oak Park Schools Administration Bldg.,** 13900 Granzon, Oak Park, MI 48237. **Laura Gogola** is the Coordinator.

Other forums such as Hazel Park and Pontiac are being considered. **The Candidate Forum Calendar on our Website will be updated if any others are scheduled.** Candidate lists are available on the Oakland County website: [www.oakgov.com/clerkrod](http://www.oakgov.com/clerkrod) under the Election Division.

**Judicial forums** for the August Primary are being planned in conjunction with the Oakland County Bar Association and the *Detroit Free Press*. The **County Commissioner Auditorium at the County Bldg.**, 1200 N. Telegraph in Pontiac has been reserved for the **evenings of Tuesday, June 24 and Wednesday, June 25 for Circuit Court (two seats) and Probate Court**, respectively. Because several judges cannot run for re-election as they will be over 70, there are open seats and, therefore, primary contests are expected. Starting time will be dependent on number of candidates. Mark your calendars.

There is also an open seat for the Berkley District Court and a possible forum there too.

## **LWVUS NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**Portland, Oregon**, is the site of the League of Women Voters of the United States 48<sup>th</sup> National Convention. It runs from **Friday, June 13 through Tuesday, June 17**. The basic business is similar to that of a Local League Annual Meeting – adopting program, electing officers, approving a budget and per-member-payment from Local Leagues and voting on proposed amendments to the Bylaws. But it is so much more.

The best part of convention is meeting other Leaguers from all over the country – dynamic individuals, willing to share their experiences and ideas on a wide variety of topics. Members caucus on program issues and the presentation of pro and con arguments at the Plenary sessions can be passionate. Eminent speakers address the convention and banquet. Workshops are offered on a range of topics.

Oakland Area's membership entitles us to three voting delegates. Any member can attend. As your President, I plan to attend. If you are interested in going, let me know at [pres@lwvoa.org](mailto:pres@lwvoa.org). - *Eva*

## **View LWV's TOWN HALL with LEGISLATIVE LEADERS on CABLE**

Copies of the January 28 Town Hall with State Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop and House Speaker Andy Dillon have been provided to cable organizations in Oakland County. Go to [www.LWVOA.org](http://www.LWVOA.org) and click on **TOWN HALL REPLAYS** to see replay schedules in various areas. As soon as a cable organization tells us its schedule, we post it on our website. The Town Hall runs two hours and provides a Q&A with these two legislative leaders on many state issues.

## **ANNUAL MEETING COMING UP ON MAY 31!**

Our **Annual Meeting on Saturday, MAY 31**, will again be held at the beautiful Shenandoah Country Club on Walnut Lake Rd. near Drake in West Bloomfield. Registration begins at 9:30 am with the business meeting at 10 am, followed by lunch and a speaker.

**Rich Robinson, Executive Director of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network**, will be our guest speaker, discussing the Michigan Supreme Court election campaigns and how the funding of them is impacting the public trust in judicial independence.

The Budget Committee of **Asma Tapert (Chair), Ann Edwards, and Fran Fisher** has recommended a budget for the next League year. No Bylaws or Local Program changes have been proposed. The Nominating Committee of **Linda DePoorter (Chair), Grace Kachaturoff, Lola Koch, Sue Abrams, and Deb Horner** has been working to determine candidates for the League board for election and appointment. If you have an area of interest and would like to serve on the League board, Contact one of them.

### **LWV Oakland Area and the Membership Recruitment Initiative**

By Sue Abram, Membership VP

Our local league has been taking part in the Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI), a pilot project sponsored by LWVUS designed to reach out to new members. Our state league, LWVMI, was chosen as one of five state leagues to participate in this program. LWVOA had volunteered up front to submit needed MRI application forms and to participate as a Local League to demonstrate Local League involvement and cooperative state-local relationships – actions which helped LWVMI to be selected.

The MRI reaches out with consistent messages that communicate the value of the League to the public and most specifically to women in the 50 to 65 age group who have retired or are about to retire. You might have noticed some of these messages on our website, in our publications, including this one, and in our email messages to you:

*As an LWV member, you are a part of an organization where smart, active leaders work to create change in their communities.*

The MRI has led us to increase our networking with other organizations and our public relations efforts to a greater degree than we have done in the past in order to expand our visibility in the community. For example, invitations to other organizations helped increase the turnout for our Town Hall. Efforts to expand contacts with media provided the following results: we are providing input to local public access cable stations – such as DVDs of our Town Hall with legislative leaders; our winning high-school student Public Service Announcement under the League's name ran for a month on our local PBS station and will run again in the fall; and the Town Hall and the February Running for Office program both resulted in front page articles in the *Oakland Press* as well as articles within other local papers.

### **Participate in Pay Equity Day at the State Capitol on April 22, 2008**

The League of Women Voters has a national position calling for equal pay for equal work. To draw attention to Equal Pay Day, a press conference is being planned on Tuesday, April 22, at the State Capitol in Lansing. Women's organizations such as the Michigan Women's Commission, AAUW, NOW, Women Work, and others will be participating. Everyone is being asked to wear RED. Details regarding time and room are not yet finalized and will be sent to members when known.

**LWV-MI Spring Workshop**  
**"Working to Create Change in our Communities"**  
**Saturday, May 10, 2008**  
**9:30 am to 2:30 pm**  
**Michigan Mutual League, 208 N. Capitol, Lansing, MI 48933**  
**in the Mutual Building (Downtown - one block from the Capitol)**

- 9:30 – 10:00 Coffee and Registration  
10:00 Welcome, Introductions  
Workshop Overview
- 10:15 – 11:00 "Communicating for Growth" – An interactive experience showing how membership growth and retention can easily permeate all of our league activities
- 11:00 – 11:45 Workshops: Choose One
- I. Membership Retention Initiative:
    - Pilot Leagues Roundtable – Successes and Challenges
  - II. Voter Service: Getting Ready for Fall 2008
  - III. Small Groups: Choose One
    - A. National Convention Delegates: Information on Proposals
    - B. Mock Elections in Public Schools: How to do it
    - C. Increasing Access for Voters with Disabilities
    - D. Obtaining Grant Money for Local Leagues
    - E. Publius.com Fundraiser for Local Leagues
    - F. Transforming Local Leagues: the Kalamazoo Experience
- 11:45 – 12:45 Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:30 Democracy Agenda: Judicial Independence Project

Registration fee: \$10.00 includes box lunch.

Registration Forms will be available at [www.LWVMI.ORG](http://www.LWVMI.ORG) beginning April 15. **Please RSVP by May 1.**

*The community needs everyone to  
participate in order to be a strong,  
safe, fair and vibrant place to live.*

Membership in the League of Women Voters  
is open to all citizens.  
Dues are \$60 per year or \$30 for students.  
See our **website: [www.LWVOA.org](http://www.LWVOA.org)**  
and click on **Join the League**  
to print a Membership Form to mail in or  
to join Online via Paypal.



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## THE NUTS & BOLTS OF RUNNING FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

by Eva Packard

Twenty women and two men who were interested in running for office or assisting a candidate turned out at OCC Orchard Ridge campus on Saturday, March 8, to learn about organizing a campaign, financing it and dealing with the media at a workshop co-sponsored by LWVOA and the Women Officials' Network (WON), AAUW, WAND, and OCC's Womencenter.

**Mary Kerwin**, Troy City Council member, talked about **Assembling Your Team and Plotting Your Strategy for a winning campaign**. She emphasized that the secret ingredient for a successful candidate was the ability to ASK – yourself, your family, your friends, neighbors, co-workers, people you worship with, office holders, and various community groups for help of all kinds – their vote, their endorsement, fundraising, walking with you, etc. Also ask the County Clerk for a candidate packet. She discussed the questions to ask in order to put together an appropriate campaign plan and what it should contain. She provided a checklist for political advertising, but noted that door-to-door was the most effective way to get votes. Mary provided suggestions on how to present yourself and the importance of listening to residents' concerns. Meeting with the press was also recommended.

**Cassandra Ulbrich**, State Board of Education member, focused on **Honing Your Message**. She talked about developing, framing and delivering your message. She introduced the Message Box with four squares: You on You, Them on You, You on Them, and Them on Them to help you frame your image to highlight what you want and be prepared to respond to what your opponent will say about you or himself/herself. Such a tool would be helpful in dealing with media questions as Capitol (Lansing) Correspondent and "Off the Record" host **Tim Skubick's** presentation on **How NOT to Deal with the Media** demonstrated when he asked attendees unexpected or tough questions and offered examples of positive and negative ways to respond.

**Suzie Mitchell** of Mitchell Interactive spoke on **Where To Find the Money**. She has been a fundraising consultant to U.S. Congressmen and Michigan Supreme Court justices. **Barbara Moorhouse**, a Senior Analyst for the Michigan Campaign Finance Network, has served as Treasurer of candidate committees and explained **What You Have to Report** and how and when as well as contribution limits.

Attendees gave the program content and speakers high marks. Lunch was provided by the culinary program of OCC. Thanks to **Debra Horner** of LWVOA and **Barbara Bonsignore** of AAUW for handling registration at the event and **Arlene Frank** for needed OCC support. **Eva Packard** of LWVOA served as Master of Ceremonies. **Special** thanks to WON Administrator **Barb Moorhouse** who arranged the speakers and facilities and support for the program. We would also like to thank **Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan and Detroit Edison** for their financial support which helped keep cost to attendees reasonable.

## *In Memoriam*

**Edith Phillips** died peacefully on Feb. 25, after completing her morning ritual of reading the New York Times. She was 86 years old and her health had been declining. Edith was an **active 50-year member of the League of Women Voters**, serving as President and on many League boards. She researched and helped develop the League's international positions.

Edith was a professor in the Wayne State University Library and Information Service Program for 23 years. She worked in academic, public, and special libraries in Michigan and Illinois, including serving as head of the Cataloging Department for the State Library of Michigan. She was a member of the American and Michigan Library Associations.

Edith served for many years on the Southfield Library Board and was instrumental in the planning, design, and construction of the new Southfield Library building.

After her retirement, Edith continued her active life, volunteering at the Detroit Institute of Arts and reading newspapers for the visually impaired over the radio. Her life was celebrated with stories and memories at a Memorial service on Mar. 15.

Edith and her husband, Clarence Phillips, had two children, Jonathan Kirk and Sara Grace. Sadly, Clarence and the children died from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) within five years of each other. Her courage was sustained during this bleak period of her life by family, colleagues and friends.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Edith B. Phillips Endowed Scholarship at the Library and Information Service Program, Wayne State University, 106 Kresge Library, Detroit, MI 48202. To honor Edith's League service, donations may be sent to LWVOA, 200 S. Washington, Ste 4, Royal Oak, MI 48067 and made payable to either LWV Ed Fund for voter service use (tax-deductible) or to LWV Oakland Area for unrestricted use.

## **Sunshine Week Program**

Professor Robert A. Sedler, JD, Distinguished Professor and Gibbs Chair in Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at Wayne State University Law School, explored issues of government secrecy, media and security issues at our March meeting at the Huntington Woods Library. Sedler said the position of the media during wars has varied from full access during the Vietnam war, the use of pool reporters during the first Gulf War, to the embedding of reporters with the troops during the Iraq war.

Because of tensions between freedom of the press and the desire of the government for secrecy, Congress enacted a Freedom of Information Act in 1966 to deal with requests for government records, consistent with the belief that the people have the "right to know" about them. The law does contain various exemptions such as classified information related to national security.

Prof. Sedler pointed out that the media has no greater rights than the public at large to receive information or to provide testimony. Unless a state passes a shield law – as Michigan has done – journalists can be compelled to testify by a grand jury. There is no national shield law, and Sedler thinks it unlikely that one will be passed.

However, editorial discretion is exercised at the highest levels by media executives. Editors use self-imposed discretion when deciding whether or not to publish material. The government may ask a newspaper to withhold certain information involving a location, agent or a foreign government. These decisions are often painfully difficult for the editor, and the journalist must be wary of the fact that a witness may have his own agenda.

The media and the government are not always in an adversarial relationship. Sometimes the government floats a trial balloon, an authorized leak. Unauthorized leaks can be the result of political infighting or simply because a reporter has a longtime relationship with an official. There is a symbiotic relationship between the government and the media.

Sedler pointed out that the United States gives more protection to freedom of speech than most other democratic countries. Hate speech is protected, but hate crimes are not protected. Freedom of speech has long been part of our national culture.



The League of Women Voters Oakland Area  
 200 S. Washington Ave., Suite 4  
 Royal Oak, MI 48067

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 A Voice for Change

## Time Dated Material Enclosed

### Calendar of Events

- |             |                |                     |  |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| Mon.        | Apr. 7         | 7 pm                | LWVOA Board Meeting, Residence Inn, 27477 Cabaret Dr, Novi   |
| Thurs.      | Apr. 10        | 7 pm                | Clarkston Schools Candidate Forum with Clarkston PTA Council (See page 3)  |
| Thurs.      | Apr. 10        | 7 pm                | Oak Park Schools Candidate Forum (See page 3) ( <a href="http://www.LWVOA.org">www.LWVOA.org</a> for latest info)  |
| Sat.        | Apr. 26        | 10am-12             | <b>Status of the State of Michigan Budget: A Look Backward and Forward</b><br>By Craig Thiel, Citizens Research Council. (See page 1)<br>Hosted by LWV Detroit Metropolitan Area at Southfield Public Library  |
| <b>Mon.</b> | <b>Apr. 28</b> | <b>12-3 pm</b>      | <b>Climate Project presentation – Lunch &amp; Learn with Lisa Kamil</b><br>Bring Your Own Lunch – Veggies, Fruit, Beverage provided. No charge.<br>Visitor Center at Heritage Park, 25099 Farmington Rd, Farmington Hills 48336<br>Co-sponsor: <b>Sierra Club</b> of Oakland County. <b>RSVP BY 4/26.</b> (See page 1) |
| Tues.       | May 6          | 7 am-8 pm           | <b>School Elections:</b> Clarenceville, Clarkston, Clawson, Ferndale, Hazel Park,<br>Lake Orion, Lamphere, Madison, Oak Park, Pontiac. <b>City:</b> Bloomfield Hills   |
| Sat.        | May 10         | 9:30 am-<br>2:30 pm | <b>LWVMI Workshop, Working to Create Change in our Communities</b><br>Lansing. \$10. Box Lunch. <b>RSVP by 5/1</b> (See page 5 for details.)   |
| Sat.        | May 31         | 9:30 am             | <b>LWVOA Annual Meeting</b> at Shenandoah Country Club<br>5600 Walnut Lake Rd, West Bloomfield   |
| Fri-Tue.    | June 13-17     |                     | LWVUS National Convention, Portland, Oregon  |
| Tues.       | June 24        |                     | Candidate Forum for Circuit Court (see page 3)   |
| Wed.        | June 25        |                     | Candidate Forum for Probate Court (see page 3)   |

***"LWV: Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement."***