



Oakland Voter

The League of Women Voters Oakland Area
725 S. Adams Rd., Room 292, Birmingham, MI 48009
Phone: 248/594-6602 Fax: 248/594-6603 website: www.lwvoa.org
President: Eva Packard e-mail: Pres@lwvoa.org

2007-2008 Issue 7

June/July 2008

Note: Our new address and phone number effective July 15th are above.

**HELP REGISTER VOTERS
June 30 through October 3
at Department of Human Services (DHS)
235 N. Saginaw, Pontiac, MI 48342**

Leagues of Women Voters throughout Michigan are partnering with Department of Human Services (DHS) offices to help them meet the National Voter Registration Act requirement to offer voter registration at such offices. They not only want to register their clients but also the people that come with their clients.

Oakland Area will be helping the Pontiac DHS office register voters beginning June 30 and running through October 3. This is a long term project. We need lots of volunteers this summer and into the fall as we will be covering each day that the office is open.

Those who are interested in registering to vote must fill out a form. Our job is to assist these individuals in completing this form and then to provide the DHS coordinator - Ms. Val Bell - with the appropriate portion of the form which will be sent to Lansing. Written instructions for all volunteers will be provided at the DHS office.

Will you volunteer to help with this worthwhile endeavor?

We are proposing that voter registration time slots be from 9 am to 12:30 and from 12:30 to 4 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday the hours would be from 10 am to 1 pm and from 1 to 4 pm.

Please let us know which day(s) you want to work and your preferred time(s) so we can create a schedule. Spouse, friends and relatives are welcome to help out. Please let us know when they would like to volunteer. With your help, we know we can make a difference and give these citizens their right to vote.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Shelley Goldberg - lwvoters@gmail.com

Carole Elder - eee24@comcast.net (see membership directory for phone numbers)

PLEASE READ THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ON PAGES 2 AND 3

Oakland Area has ambitious goals to continue our work and do more!

We need YOUR HELP to make it happen.

See the **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** list on Page 3.

We are working on several programs for the fall, including Fair & Impartial Courts, Prisons & Jails, Leadership and, of course, Voter Service. This has been our busiest Primary election season ever, and we have lots more coming up. Thanks to all who helped. We also want to do more Education and Advocacy and need to build our Membership and Financial infrastructure to support it.

*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.*

LWVOA Board of Directors, 2008-2009

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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*

On July 1, the Board met at our new location to set our goals and plan activities for the coming League year. Key input for us were the **brainstorming ideas and directions provided by members at our recent Annual Meeting**. The Annual Meeting Workbook had a report on the 2007-08 goals and activities. See Page 5 for an article on the Annual Meeting.

The Board voted to continue our six main goals and develop activities based on member input to achieve them. The **goals for 2008-09** are:

- Continue and Enhance Voter Services
- Participate in Program Studies of Public Policy Issues
- Increase Advocacy for Our Positions at ALL Levels
- Achieve Fundraising Goals
- Increase Membership and Member Involvement
- Increase Visibility

In setting direction for the next year, we also considered decisions made at the **June National Convention** which **Debbie Macon** and **I** attended as your representatives. The convention adopted programs to prepare educational materials and provide them to members and our communities on **Health Care** and **Climate Change** to ready Leagues throughout the nation to do significant advocacy for our positions.

At the convention banquet, we heard from a prominent jurist on the need for and efforts to achieve **Fair and Impartial Courts**, the topic of our Annual Meeting speaker. LWVUS President Mary Wilson announced a **Leadership Development Initiative** to groom members for League leadership. Future national and local **VOTERS** will tell you more about the convention and workshop sessions your delegates (including Judi Bank of Oakland, CA) attended.

We have developed a tentative calendar by month and much work is needed to fill in the details. All have Membership and Visibility components.

This summer our focus will be on **Voter Service: Voter Guides** posted on our website for the August Primary by the time you read this; at least 34 **Candidate Forums** (some with partners) with reruns on cable; **Voter Registration** running all summer and into the fall; and planning for the printed Voter Guide and Candidate Forums for the November General Election. Thanks to the **Taubman Company** for funding for the printed guide. Many members (and non-members) are helping with these Voter Service projects.

See Page 1 about our partnership with the **Department of Human Services (DHS)** to help them comply with federal law and offer Voter Registration to their clients. Thank you to **Carole Elder** and **Shelley Goldberg** who are leading this tremendous three-month project to register voters at the Pontiac DHS office.

(Continued on Page 3)

President's Message continued from Page 2:

Thank you to **Debra Horner** who is leading the **Voter Guide project** which includes all Township contests for the first time, a major undertaking as Oakland County has 21 townships. The Primary in many townships is often the deciding vote when the other major political party has no candidate. (Examples: All Independence Twp offices, West Bloomfield Clerk + Parks & Recreation Board, Oakland Twp Supervisor + Trustees.)

Thank you to **Judy Bateman, Jerry Burden, Linda DePoorter, Ann Edwards, Laura Gogola, Lola Koch and Barbara Moorhouse** for coordinating a record number of forums between them. See the Calendar of Events for a list of the forums. When we know rebroadcast schedules for a forum, we add rerun info to our Candidate Forum calendar on the website so keep checking back and clicking on REFRESH. Our **judicial forums** will also be able to be **viewed via streaming video on www.ocba.org**, the Oakland County Bar Association website which also contains candidate responses to a 29-question questionnaire.

Programs planned for the fall:

September 17 is Constitution Day. We are working with LWV of Michigan and partnering with other Leagues in Southeast Michigan to put on a major evening event with speakers on **Fair and Impartial Courts** that day or that week. Details in our next *Voter*.

Therefore, our Fall Luncheon will likely be in **October** and will focus on **Prisons and Jails**, a topic mentioned by multiple members at the Annual Meeting and which is the topic of state study.

After the election, we are working to set up a weekend afternoon event with the **Leadership Development Initiative** as its focus. We are excited about the potential speaker to keynote that event.

And for fun and fundraising, we are planning a **Wine Tasting Party** before the holidays.

Finally, by July 15, we will have moved to our **new office at 725 S. Adams Rd., #292, Birmingham 48009**. It has a lower cost and better parking. Callers to our Royal Oak office will be told the new phone number. Thank you to **Laura Gogola** who is coordinating that move. Because of the move, we decided to hold off the **annual dues mailing** until we were in our new location so expect it soon. We would appreciate it if you would respond promptly to send your dues as the League year started July 1.

VOTE August 5 and encourage others to vote too. Tell them they can get information about who and what is on the ballot on www.lwvoa.org via our Voter Guides. Encourage them to attend our Candidate Forums or view them on cable or online if a judicial forum.

Eva pres@lwvoa.org

“As a League of Women Voter 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.”

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED now: *Contact me or others if you can help with any of the following:*

- **Voter Registration** Mon-Fri morning and afternoon at Pontiac DHS Offices through Oct. 3
- **Cut & Pasting** of candidate lists into Publius sample ballots available online which reflect all positions on the ballot and allow linking to LWV voter guides at all levels of government
- **Cable Coordinator** to interface with Oakland County's many cable organizations for our candidate forums and other programs
- **Editor** with MS Word skills for our *VOTER* newsletter to be mentored by current Editor
- **Coordinator** for our eight ***They Represent You*** brochures listing elected officials at all levels
- **Coordinators, moderators,** and other **workers** to help set up and hold **Candidate Forums**
- Word processing skills to assist in **Voter Guide preparation** for all elections
- **Program Coordinators**
- **Advocacy Chair.**
- **Membership and Fundraising** assistance to develop ideas and follow through on them

Detroit Metropolitan Area LWV holds Annual Meeting

Mary Bugeia, Acting President, called the meeting to order at the Doubletree Hotel in Dearborn on June 27. Elected to one-year unexpired terms were Mary Bugeia, President, and **Laura Gogola**, 1st Vice President. Elected to two-year terms were **Karen DeGrendel**, 2nd Vice President; Carolyn Buell, Treasurer; and Toni Tront and Joan Morris, Directors. Continuing in office for another year are **Judy Bateman**, Secretary and Fran Schonenberg, Director.

Following the business meeting, **Carmine Palombo**, SEMCOG Transportation Chair talked on **"Show Me the Money"**. We learned some ironic facts: when more people take public transit, revenue from the gas tax goes down and so less money is in the pot for roads and for public transportation. Also, the increase in gasoline may slow urban sprawl, but the cost of "in-filling" older communities can be more expensive than starting from scratch. Palombo said that we have to have policies supportive of what we want to accomplish and a dedicated tax that will go up – not down.

Take the following quiz to find out how much you know the Michigan transportation funding!

1. For every gallon of gas we buy, we pay state tax of:
a) 19 cents b) 18 cents c) 24 cents
2. This tax was established in what year?
a) 2000 b) 1997 c) 1970
3. How does this tax compare with the other 50 states?
a) 42nd b) 35th c) 15th
4. The majority of this tax goes to:
a) transit b) trails c) maintaining roads
5. For every gallon of gas we buy, we pay the federal gas tax of:
a) 12 cents b) 18.4 cents c) 22.6 cents
6. Michigan receives back what percent of the federal gas taxes we pay?
a) 91% b) 88% c) 98%
7. Vehicle registration fees account for what % of the Michigan Transportation Fund?
a) 25% b) 30% c) 45%
8. Most of our transportation system was built in what decade?
a) 1950's b) 1930's c) 1960's
9. Which of the following are cost effective ways to reduce congestion?
a) signal retiming b) car pools c) transit d) additional lanes
10. It is projected that we need the following in SE Michigan through 2030
a) \$70 billion b) \$20 billion c) \$40 billion

Answers on page 6.

We called this the June/July VOTER so that you would know you did not miss the June issue. We've been working on the Primary since mid-May plus with annual meetings, convention, our move and vacation time for many, we are only now getting it to you in early July. Our next issue will be out in August so you can fill in your calendars with our fall events. We also will use e-mail for updates as soon as we know firm dates.

2008 LWVOA ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

We thank **Bernadette Najor** who once again arranged for our Annual Meeting to be held at the Shenandoah Country Club in West Bloomfield. The business meeting moved quickly with no proposed changes for Bylaws, Budget or Program. We will review and update our various local government positions after the state League announces a revised position on Local Government.

Elected to the Board were **Bernadette Najor**, 1st Vice President; **P.J. Royale**, 3rd Vice President; **Fran Fisher**, Treasurer; **Patricia Finn**, Secretary; and **Laura Gogola, Randa Keener, Alissa Terrell**, Directors. Elected to the Nominating Committee were **Geri Rinschler** as Chair and **Andrea Zalewski** and **Margaret Kanost** as members.

Eva Packard highlighted a couple of items from the President's Report included in the Annual Meeting booklet and which contains a description of the impressive list of activities that our League took part in this year. Then she led members present in brainstorming on topics for programs, as well as suggestions for membership and visibility.

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Speaker Rich Robinson on the Funding of Michigan Supreme Court Campaigns

Our Annual Meeting speaker, Rich Robinson, Executive Director of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network, spoke about the increasing amounts of money being spent on judicial campaigns, plus the amount of money being put into candidate-focused issue ads. These ads define a candidate, but do not say to vote for – or against - this person. Since 2000, candidate-focused television issue advertisements have accounted for more than \$10 million of spending in Supreme Court campaigns. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce spent more than \$6 million of that total supporting the candidacies of the five Republican incumbents on the Court or opposing their Democratic opponents. In the last four election cycles, the Chamber has spent more than any candidate on the ballot. But because these ads are not considered to be campaign expenditures under Michigan law, the contributors are not disclosed.

Robinson insists that 1) citizens need to know who is contributing to Supreme Court campaigns, 2) justices should report their personal financial holdings, and 3) public financing of campaigns, after a candidate raises a certain amount, would provide judges a way to finance their campaigns. For more information on judicial financing, go to www.mcfn.org. Members said YES to holding a forum on Fair and Impartial Courts.

Lunch and Learn at Heritage Park on Climate Change

Lunch and Learn was enjoyed by about 40 League members and guests at the Visitor Center in Heritage Park in Farmington Hills on April 28. Members brought bag lunches. **Judy Bateman** and **Laura Gogola** contributed dessert, and the League provided fruit, vegetables and beverages.

Lisa Kamil, a League member, is a volunteer for The Climate Project which is trying to raise awareness of global climate changes. She used slides developed by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and publicized by Al Gore; the four scientists and Gore shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 for their work. Lisa spoke urgently of the severe consequences that global warming will have on the world if action is not taken promptly.

Tiffany Hartung of the Sierra Club of Oakland County described the Cool Cities initiative urging local communities to take concrete steps to create a greener environment such as replacing existing city vehicle fleets with hybrids, promoting public transit options, replacing all conventional light bulbs in government owned building with compact florescent bulbs and convening Citizens Advisory Groups to formulate city climate action plans.

Joe Derek, City of Farmington Hills naturalist, attended the meeting and reported on what he has observed in Heritage Park such as changes in migratory patterns of birds, which he attributes to changing weather patterns.

Answers to the Transportation Funding Quiz on page 4:

1. **a** In addition to the 19 cents gas tax we pay per gallon, we pay the state sales tax which goes into the general fund.
2. **b** Each year it costs more to maintain and improve roads. The gas tax has not kept up with inflation or with costs.
3. **a** Pennsylvania pays 32.3 cents; Wisconsin, 30 cents; Ohio 28 cents; Illinois 19 cents
4. **c** 90% goes to roads, 10% to transit.
5. **b**
6. **a** Michigan receives back only 91% of the tax we pay to the federal government, making us a donor state.
7. **c** Vehicle registration fees, which are based on the price of your vehicle, have been going up, but may go down if people downsize their cars.
8. **c** A reconstructed road can last up to 25 years, while resurfacing that road will last roughly 10 years. Most of our roads now need to be rebuilt.
9. **a, b and c.** Signal retiming, car pools and transit are very cost effective. Adding lanes to the roadway or building new roads is very expensive and has a high environmental impact.
10. **a** Where will the money come from? In the short term, we need to raise the gas tax. In the long term we need stable sources of revenue that can raise enough revenue to meet our urgent needs.

**Women's Equality Day
Luncheon and ERA Update**

Speaker: Dr. Berta Seitz, Coordinator ERA – Arkansas

Saturday, August 23, 2008, 11:30 am

One Under Par Restaurant and Banquet Hall

35780 Five Mile Road, Livonia, MI (between Farmington and Newburgh)

\$25.00 before Aug. 11, \$30 after August 11. Reservations closed after August 18.

Cosponsored by American Association of University Women of Michigan, MI Federation of Business and Professional Women/MI, League of Women Voters of MI, Michigan ERAmerica, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom/Metro Detroit

Reservation for Women's Equality Day Celebration August 23, 2008:

Name: _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____ Phone: _____

Number attending: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to:

Michigan Coalition for Equal Rights Studies (**MICERS**)
Mail to: 21697 McClung, Southfield, MI 48075

**Reservations \$25.00 before August 11,
\$30 August 11-18, 2008**

Phone: Faith or Laura (see membership directory)

*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**

and click on **Join the League**

to print a Membership Form to mail in or
to join Online via Paypal.



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LWVUS Immigration Position

Leagues throughout the U.S. participated in a 2-year study and provided their input. The position reached nationally is listed below. It closely parallels what LWVOA members recommended.

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- Educational program opportunities; and
- Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.



The League of Women Voters Oakland Area
 725 S. Adams Square, Room 292
 Birmingham, MI 48009

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A Voice for Citizens,
 A Voice for Change

Time Dated Material Enclosed

Calendar of Events

Candidate Forums: Check LWVOA.ORG website or your cable listings for forum rerun schedules.

Held in June: Judge of District Courts 45A, 46 and 52-2 + Circuit Court + Probate Court
 (Video of judicial forums will also be streamed on OCBA.ORG website)

West Bloomfield Township Supervisor, Treasurer, Clerk, Trustees, Parks & Recreation
 State Representative District 39 (covers W. Bloomfield & Commerce Twps)

- Mon. July 7 7 pm **County Commissioner District 21** (Berkley, Lathrup Village, part of Southfield)
 @Berkley City Hall, 3338 Coolidge, 48072 [Coordinator: Laura Gogola]
 - Wed. July 9 7 pm Washington Township Supervisor, Clerk & Treasurer (+Trustee statements taped)
 @Washington Township Hall, 57900 Van Dyke, 48094 [Ann Edwards]
 - Thur. July 10 7 pm **State Representative District 27** (Berkley, HW, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Pleasant Ridge, Oak Park)
 @Huntington Woods City Hall, 26815 Scotia, 48070 [Judy Bateman]
 - Thur. July 10 7 pm **Oakland Township Supervisor & Trustees**
 @Older Persons' Commission, 650 Letica Dr, Rochester 48307 [Ann Edwards]
 - Mon. July 14 7 pm **Judge (partial term) of District Court 50** (Pontiac)
 @Pontiac City Hall, 47450 Woodward, 48342 [Linda DePoorter]
 - Tues. July 15 6:45 pm **State Rep Dist. 38** (Novi, N'vl, Lyon, S. Lyon, WaldLk, Wixom) + **County Comm. Dist. 9** (Novi, N'vl)
 @Novi City Hall, 45175 W. 10 Mile Rd, 48375 [Jerry Burden]
 - Wed. July 16 7:30 pm **State Representative District 45** (Rochester, Rochester Hills, Oakland Twp)
 @Rochester Hills City Hall, 1000 Rochester Hills Dr, 48309 [Barb Moorhouse]
 - Thurs. July 17 7 pm **State Rep Dist. 44** (Highland, Springfld, Indep., WhiteLk) + **County Comm. Dist 6** (WhLk, Wtfd)
 @Dublin Senior Center, 685 Union Lake Rd, White Lake 48386 [Lola Koch]
 - Thurs. July 17 7 pm **County Comm. Districts 24/19/13/20** together - sponsored by LWV Troy
 @Community Media Network cable studio, 1230 Souter Blvd, Troy 48083
 (All include Troy; 24=MadHts, RO sliver; 19=Clawson; 13=s.RochHills, BITwp; 20=Birm, BI.Hls, BITwp)
 - Weds. July 23 7 pm **Farmington Hills City Council (partial term)** - sponsored by COHA
 Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 W. 11 Mile Rd, 48336 - **FINAL election**
 - Sat. July 26 5 pm **Royal Oak Township Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer & Trustees**
 @Royal Oak Twp Recreation Bldg., 21272 Mendota, 48220 [Judy Bateman]
- Tues. Aug. 5 7am-8pm Primary Election** for federal, state, county, township, and judicial elections
 "LWV: Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement."