



Oakland Voter

League of Women Voters Oakland Area
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President: Judy Bateman e-mail: Pres@lwvoa.org

2010-2011 Issue 5

May-June 2011

The Impact of Medical Marijuana Law on Local Communities

Thursday, May 5th at 7:00 p.m.

at **Bloomfield Township HALL**

4200 Telegraph Road

Bloomfield Township, MI 48302

(Between Lone Pine and Long Lake Rd. on West side of Telegraph)

See Map on Page 4 – Meeting is NOT at Library

The League of Women Voters Oakland Area (LWVOA) is hosting a panel discussion of the issues related to the implementation of the state law, approved by the voters in 2008, to permit the use and cultivation of marijuana for specified medical conditions. The meeting is open to the public.

Speakers will present the viewpoints of patients, communities, and law enforcement:

- **Neil Rockind** Attorney representing marijuana patients and caregivers
- **Dan Crist** Attorney, City of Ferndale
- **Jan Roncelli** Bloomfield Township Clerk
- **Beth Hand** Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor and Head of Narcotics Section

The 2008 Michigan Medical Marijuana Act stated that the law would:

- Permit physician-approved use of marijuana by registered patients with debilitating medical conditions including cancer, glaucoma, HIV, AIDS, hepatitis C, MS and other conditions as may be approved by the Dept. of Community Health.
- Permit registered individuals to grow limited amounts of marijuana for qualifying patients in an enclosed, locked facility.
- Require the Dept. of Community Health to establish an identification card system for patients qualified to use marijuana and individuals qualified to grow marijuana.
- Permit registered and unregistered patients and primary caregivers to assert medical reasons for using marijuana as a defense to any prosecution involving marijuana.

As of now, about 64,000 patients have been registered and 25,000 caregiver cards have been issued. About 23,000 of the 112,000 applications submitted are still pending. Each patient can cultivate up to 12 marijuana plants. A registered caregiver can assist up to 5 patients.

While the state law legalizes medical marijuana across the state, it lacks provisions for the regulation of retail dispensaries. Thus communities are left on their own as to how to handle selling of marijuana for approved medical purposes. Some communities have allowed medical-marijuana shops, while others have banned dispensaries, either permanently or passed moratoriums for a given period. Councils across Oakland County are considering zoning regulations, local licensing provisions, and restrictions on growers and sellers before implementing the law. The city of Ferndale allows shops; Bloomfield Township does not.

Federal law prohibits the non-medically approved use, possession and distribution of marijuana. Judges are confused as to how to administer the laws when cases are brought before them by law enforcement, and there are many calls for the legislature to provide clarifying legislation to avoid a multitude of conflicting local conditions and decisions.

The League of Women Voters Oakland Area is pleased to announce that
U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow will be the featured speaker
at our Annual Meeting on **Saturday, June 11, 2011, at 10 a.m.** at the
Shenandoah Country Club, 5600 Walnut Lake Road, **West Bloomfield**, MI 48323
Reservations are required. Details will be available at www.LWVOA.org.

LWVOA Board of Directors,
2010-2011

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THE OAKLAND VOTER is the official publication of the League of Women Voters. It is published six 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.

- Editor: Eva Packard

LWVOA ON FACEBOOK!

If you are not already a member of Facebook, you can sign up at www.FACEBOOK.com and make "League of Women Voters Oakland Area" one of your Facebook friends.

Invite your friends to learn about League activities and upcoming programs.

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

On March 31st we held the awards ceremony for the winners of the high school **PSA Contest, "What Can *I* Do? The Green Power of One"**. This has become my favorite League event because it celebrates the efforts and creativity of high school students and recognizes their contribution to the community. There were video, audio, and essay entries. The winners received a monetary prize, but more than that they experienced great pride in themselves and in each other. It was for them a shining moment in front of family and friends. Kudos to the **PSA Committee; Sheryl Mitchell, Fran Fisher, Shelly Goldberg, and especially the Chair, Renate Soulen, whose hard work over many months assured a positive result.**

Renate also hosted our **meeting on Alternative Voting** at which Deb Horner explained Plurality Voting, Approval Voting, and Instant Runoff Voting and member consensus was obtained. Thank you, Renate & Deb.

The April 2nd **Redistricting Meeting** was well attended and informative. Thanks to Sheryl Mitchell, Board member and Senior Advisor to the Oakland County Commission, who provided a power point presentation that guided us through the county redistricting process. Christina Kuo, Executive Director of Common Cause, spoke about the Congressional and legislative district process and presented the film "Gerrymandering".

See information in this voter on the Thursday, May 5th meeting on **Medical Marijuana**. This meeting at the Bloomfield Township Hall, 4200 Telegraph at 7:00 pm, is open to the public.

Coming up also are 2 **Candidate Forums** for the May 3rd election: Lake Orion School Board, Thurs., Apr. 21st, 7 pm, at the Orion Township Library, and Bloomfield Hills City Commission, Mon, Apr. 18th, 7 pm, at its City Hall. **Voter Guides** prepared by Deb Horner for the election are posted on our Website www.LWVOA.org.

We are very excited to have **Senator Debbie Stabenow** for our **speaker at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 11th, 10:00 am** at the Shenandoah Country Club. A great opportunity to bring a guest.

We are also sending 8 delegates to **State Convention** in Traverse City May 20-22. As you can see we are very busy. There seem to be so many issues that need to be addressed and be informed about. **Thank you for your support for these past two years as President.**

Judy Bateman, President

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.

What Can "T" Do? The Green Power of One Winners of LWVOA's PSA contest recognized



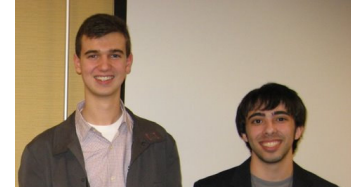
Winners of the Public Service Announcement (PSA) contest, which focused on the responsibility and opportunities of the *individual* to conserve energy, were recognized at an Awards Ceremony on March 31st. In front of a large enthusiastic audience, the winning essay was read (see below); the winning radio and TV entries were aired. All can be seen/heard on our website www.LWVOA.org. The following winners were selected from a large number of excellent entries and received monetary rewards:

Essay 1st Place: **Omkar Shende** of Troy H.S.; teacher: Shanna French

Radio 1st Place: **Paul Stewart & Zac Barnett** of Andover H.S (pictured left to right);
teacher: Pete Bowers

2nd Place: (a tie) **Grace McIlhon; Jeremy Fishman** both
of Andover H.S.; teacher: Pete Bowers

3rd Place: **Natasha Aubrey & Teanna Shells** of Academy
of the Sacred Heart H.S.; teacher: Andrew Baran



TV 1st Place: **Brandon Neal** (pictured) & **Kevin Lalko** of Troy Athens H.S.;
Teacher: Adam Burns (Kevin absent due to National Honor Society induction)

2nd Place: Team of **Shelby Bruseloff, Kelly Giuliani, Allie Ravid,**
Nikhil Mankuzhy & Kara Brody of West Bloomfield H.S.;
Sponsor: Julie Fromm



Many contributed to making this PSA contest possible. We thank them *all* for supporting a greener planet, with particular thanks to:

Our Judges: L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive; Greg Bowman, WWJ Radio;
Harvey Gersin, West Bloomfield Cable Advisory Board; Joe Johnson, CMNtv Program Director;
Jennie Miller, C and G News reporter; and Joni Hubred-Golden, publisher

Community Partners: Metro Recycling Solutions, General Motors, St. John Providence Health System,
Redstone Architects, Peter Basso Associates, Newman Consulting Group, and Johnny Pomodoro's Fresh Market

Media Partners: WXYZ-TV, WWJ Radio, WWJ-TV, CMNtv, WKBD-TV, DPTV, WJBK-FOX2,
WOCCA, Civic Center TV, Southfield Cable 15, SWOCC, and BCTV

PSA Committee: Renate Soulen (Chair), Shelley Goldberg, Fran Fisher, and Sheryl Mitchell
with help from Patricia Finn, Tera Moon, and students Caroline Willett and Matthew Williams

Refreshments: Sue Abrams, Judy Bateman, Fran Fisher, Deb Horner, Eva Packard, and Donna Sklar

Media guru: Joe Johnson of CMNtv who took care of all the PSA media needs.

Omkar Shende's ESSAY:

Being green. You hear that buzzword everywhere, but dismiss it instantly. After all, what difference can one person make? Frankly, a whole world of difference.

The average car puts out over 19,000 pounds of CO₂ in a year. Most of that amount comes from short trips to the store, school, or the park. If you were to bike or walk even half of those times, you could halve your carbon footprint, and burn some 9,000 calories over the course of a year. In addition, the runoff of oil from cars that pollutes driveways and streets is reduced.

Americans produce 56 tons of trash per person, per year, and only a tenth of recyclable things are actually recycled. If you were to recycle the thirty cans that the average person uses instead of throwing them out, it would stop almost a ton of pollutants from being pumped into the atmosphere. We throw away nearly a hundred plastic bags every year. Reusing those will save 6 cubic yards of landfill space and 10,000 kWh of energy, enough to light your home for months. And recycling all that junk mail and useless paper? It saves almost a hundred trees and 500 gallons of oil.

Most importantly, you can empower others around you to reduce their waste as well. See all those statistics above? Imagine if they were multiplied by a thousand. You can make a cleaner planet for the future, and the League of Women Voters Oakland Area wants you to know that.

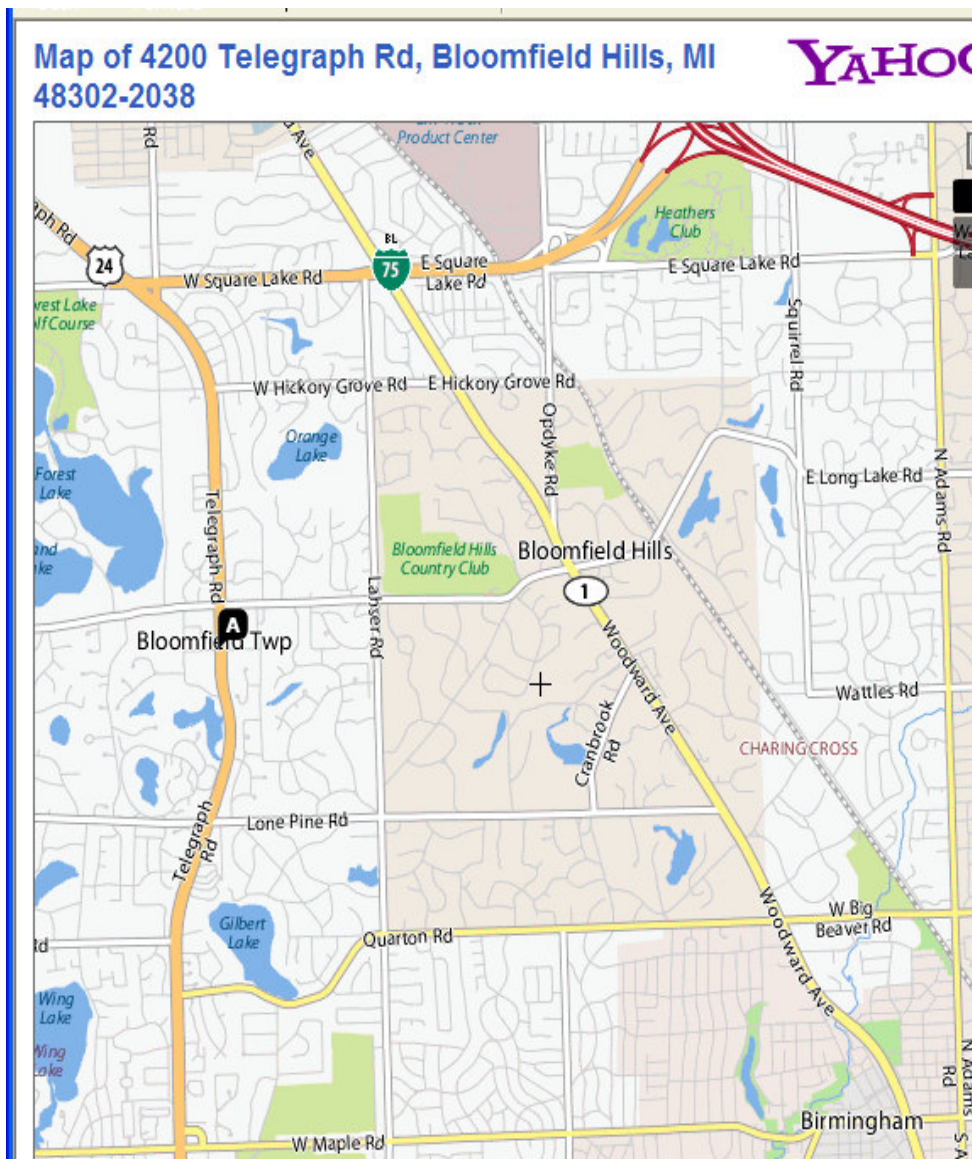


VOTER GUIDES & CANDIDATE FORUMS for MAY 3, 2011 ELECTION

Only one Oakland County school district has an election Tues., May 3rd – for **Lake Orion School Board** with 13 candidates running for 4 full 4-year terms and 1 candidate running for a partial 2-year term. Only one city has an election with 4 candidates running for 3 seats on the **Bloomfield Hills City Commission**. There is also a **Primary election in County Commissioner District 2 (Highland, Holly, Rose, and Springfield Townships)** to complete the balance of the term of Bill Bullard (who was appointed County Clerk) with 3 Republicans and 1 Democrat running. Several communities (Bloomfield Hills, Clawson, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Madison Hts, Southfield) and two school districts (Clawson, Northville) have Proposals on the ballot. **Deb Horner** has prepared **Voter Guides** for these contests and they have been posted by **Tera Moon** on our website www.LWVOA.ORG.

Candidate Forums have been scheduled by **Jerry Burden** for the **Bloomfield Hills City Commission on April 18th** and by **Judy Bateman** for the **Lake Orion School Board on April 21st**. See Page 8 for forum locations. Both forums will be taped and **rebroadcast on local cable**.

* **They Represent You brochures** have been updated to reflect the 2010 elections and posted on our website www.LWVOA.org. The brochure for the Rochester Area has been printed. Other brochures will be printed in the coming months. Thank you to all who helped gather and verify information. *



LWVOA General Meeting
Impact of Medical Marijuana
Law on Local Communities

Thursday, May 5th at 7 p.m.
at

Bloomfield Township Hall
(NOT at the Library)
4200 Telegraph Road
Bloomfield Twp, MI 48302

Township Hall is located
SOUTH of Long Lake Rd.
and is on the WEST side
of Telegraph Rd.

No RSVP is required.
Meeting is open to the public.
Invite your friends.

The new law is impacting
communities across Michigan
and many are trying to set up
reasonable ground rules for safe
and fair implementation.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE DETROIT METROPOLITAN AREA

ANNUAL MEETING LUNCHEON AND FUNDRAISER

Saturday, June 25, 2011

*Fortesa Restaurant
543 N. Main Street
Rochester, MI 48307*

PROPOSED NEW INTERNATIONAL TRADE CROSSING

Our program will feature speakers that will address the issue of the proposed additional bridge crossing to Canada. Options will be discussed and you will have the opportunity to participate in a question and answer session.

10:00 a.m. Registration
10:30 a.m. Business Meeting
11:45 a.m. Luncheon
12:30 p.m. Program

Fortesa restaurant is located on the west side of Main Street in downtown Rochester. It is not visible from the street. Driving north on Main Street, turn left at the first driveway past University Drive. The restaurant is in the court yard to your right as you enter. Additional free parking and entrances are available at the rear of the restaurant.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____ Number Attending: _____

City/Zip: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

_____ I will attend the Luncheon and Program Cost: \$35.00

_____ I will attend the Program only Cost: \$20.00

Please select entrée: _____ Veal Marsala _____ Roasted Chicken Rosemary

_____ Salmon/Spinach _____ Pasta/Artichokes & Wild Mushrooms
with Wine Sauce

Served with chef's selection of salad – vegetable – beverages – dessert

*Please mail this Registration Form and check made payable to LWV-DMA to:
Kathy Dorn 1923 Dunham Drive Rochester, MI 48306 (248) 841-1131*

DEADLINE: June 15, 2011

Cultivating Civility in Politics is Theme of LWVMI State Convention

The **LWVMI State Convention** in **Traverse City** on the **weekend of May 20-22** begins Friday evening and runs through noon on Sunday. On Saturday evening, **former Governor William Milliken** will be honored with a **Making Democracy Work award for Civility in Politics**. His 14 years as Governor serves as a model for civility among politicians of all persuasions.

Saturday's banquet speaker will be **Hans Voss, Executive Director of the Michigan Land Institute**, a nonprofit organization founded in 1995 to establish an approach to economic development that strengthens communities. As people struggle to do more with less, the Michigan Land Institute finds fast, creative ways to turn public spaces into treasured communities.

Workshop leaders will include Kelly McFarland Stratman and Pat Donath, both representing LWVUS. They will share the latest information about membership recruitment, leadership development and streamlining. Pat will present a workshop on Non-Partisanship and Elections in a New Era.

As of this writing, Oakland Area has 7 delegates going with one more spot open. Contact Judy Bateman at 248-399-2815 if you are interested in going. LWVOA covers standard Registration which includes meals.

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Executive Director

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REDISTRICTING in 2011

District lines will be redrawn in 2011 for Michigan's U.S. Congressional delegation, for Michigan's 38 State Senate and 110 State House seats, and for the Oakland County Board of Commissioners based on the results of the 2010 Census.

At the April 2nd General Meeting about the 2011 Redistricting process, **Sheryl Mitchell**, Senior Analyst for the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, **explained how the process works in Oakland County**. As a county with over one million residents, the Board of Commissioners can range from 25 to 35 Commissioners. In counties with a population of 75,000 or more, the Apportionment Commission which does the Redistricting consists of the County Clerk, County Treasurer, Prosecuting Attorney, and the county chairs of the Democratic and Republican parties.

In Oakland County, there are 3 Democrats (Treasurer Andy Meisner, Prosecutor Jessica Cooper, Democratic Party Chair Frank Houston) and 2 Republicans (Clerk Bill Bullard, Republican Party Chair Jim Thienel) on the Apportionment Commission. At its first meeting on March 2nd, 2011, Houston was named Chairman. They set guidelines which provide for public access to plans and allow for comment. The Open Meetings Act applies. Once census tract data is received late in March, they have 60 days to redraw the district lines. Appeals are allowed for 30 days thereafter.

The County Board's responsibilities are to adopt the county budget, establish the county millage rate and approve county policies. Currently Oakland County has 25 Commissioner Districts. The first task will be to determine the number of districts for the next 10 years. With the 2010 Census population at about 1,200,000, each district should have about 48,000 residents if the Apportionment Commission keeps the County Board size at 25. Districts must be contiguous and as compact as practicable and cannot be drawn for partisan advantage. The 61 city/township/village lines and precinct lines can only be divided if needed to meet the population standard with no more than a 5% variation. For meeting and mapping information, see <http://www.oakgov.com/clerkrod/elections/apportionment.html>.

Christina Kuo, Executive Director of Common Cause, showed the movie, **Gerrymandering**, which showed how district lines can be creatively drawn (such as in a salamander shape) so that they favor incumbents. It gave examples from several states and featured a ballot proposal fight in California to amend the state constitution to create an independent commission to handle redistricting. That amendment was narrowly passed in 2008 and will be used in 2011. In California, the state Legislature had previously been responsible for drawing Congressional and legislative districts. That allowed politicians to pick their voters, not the other way around.

In 2011, the Michigan Legislature will draw federal and state district lines based on the 2010 Census. With 9,883,640 residents, Michigan will be reduced from 15 to 14 Congressional districts of about 706,000 residents each. Legislative districts will have about 260,000 for State Senate and 90,000 for State House. Wayne County's loss was the largest in the state which will likely reduce elected representation from the Southeast Michigan area.

The **Michigan Redistricting Collaborative** which includes Common Cause, LWVMI, the Michigan Nonprofit Association and many other organizations, is calling for greater transparency in the process of drawing district lines. It is advocating that data used to draw maps be available on a website for public view, that there be 4 public hearings (including 3 outside of Lansing), and that proposed maps be posted online 30 days prior to adoption and allow for public comment. The redistricting process began April 12th and must be completed and signed by the Governor (who can veto it) by November 1st.

See the April 2011 Michigan VOTER for a description of the collaborative's March 14th *Draw the Line Michigan* forum, with national and state speakers addressing the redistricting process, followed by "Community Conversations" on the topic in smaller groups. See <http://michiganredistricting.org> to participate in a competition on redrawing district lines for Congress and the Legislature. The three maps that best fit with objective and fair criteria will be submitted to the Michigan legislature for consideration.

LWVMI speaks out on areas of the Governor's Budget

Based on a comparison of items proposed in the Governor's Budget to LWVMI's program positions, the State Board approved the following stands:

- Oppose the elimination of the Earned Income Tax Credit and the limiting of public assistance to 48 months
- Oppose the steep cuts in K-12 education funding and the reduced funding for local libraries
- Support the tax on retirement income (other than Social Security) except for low-income seniors
- Support maintaining the level of health care, community college and early childhood education funding

While the League does not have positions on many aspects of the Governor's budget, it does support alternative funding options such as a graduated income tax, sales tax on services, or a higher income tax rate (individual or business). LWVMI believes the **state-local tax structure should be adequate, equitable, flexible and moderately progressive** and that the state should provide basic resources for an adequate quality of life for children and families



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A Voice for Citizens,
 A Voice for Change

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Time Dated Material Enclosed

Calendar of Events

- Mon. Apr. 18 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Bloomfield Hills City Commission**
 City Hall, 45 E. Long Lake Rd., Bloomfield Hills 48304
- Thu. Apr. 21 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Lake Orion School Board**
 Orion Township Library, 825 Joslyn Rd, Lake Orion 48362
- Thu. Apr. 28 7 pm LWVOA Board meeting at 725 S. Adams Rd, Birmingham 48009
- Tue. May 3 7am-8pm **Local Elections in a few areas.** See Voter Guides on www.LWVOA.org.
- Thu. May 5 7 pm Panel on the *Impact of Medical Marijuana Law on local communities***
 A discussion of issues related to implementing the 2008 state law from the viewpoint of patients, communities and law enforcement.
Bloomfield Township Hall, 4200 Telegraph, Bloomfield Twp 48302
- Fri.-Sun. May 20-22 State Convention, Traverse City.
- Sat. Jun. 11 10 am LWVOA Annual Meeting & Luncheon [WATCH for Mailer in May**
Speaker: Senator Debbie Stabenow to make a reservation!]
 Shenandoah Country Club, 5600 Walnut Lake Rd, West Bloomfield 48323
- Sat. Jun. 25 10 am LWV of Detroit Metropolitan Area Annual Meeting & Luncheon
 Speakers on proposed **New International Trade Crossing** to Canada
 Fortesa Restaurant, 543 N. Main St, Rochester, MI 48307

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 A HISTORY OF CHANGE
 A FUTURE OF HOPE**