



Oakland Voter

League of Women Voters Oakland Area

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

Mock Election Planned at Levey Middle School

Cathy Hodson and Toni Whitley answered the call of Richard Zager, a social studies teacher at Levey Middle School in Southfield, to plan a student election. It's scheduled for November 5th – you can't get more realistic than that! It is going to be set up like a regular election complete with voter sign-in. There will be a table where students have to show their photo I.D. which will be checked against a print-out of student names. Then they will proceed into a gym where Mr. Zager will provide improvised voting booths. Toni has constructed ballots which will include candidates running for office in Southfield and our national candidates. It will be interesting to see what the results will be.

The New Torch Bearers of Public Policy: Millennium Generation Leaders

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Regency Manor, 25228 West 12 Mile Road, Southfield 48034

(north side of Twelve Mile between Northwestern Hwy. and Telegraph Rd.)

\$15 includes appetizers, cash bar

6 - 6:45 p.m.: Informal post-election conversation – Who Won and Now What?
7 - 8 p.m.: Panel of young leaders will discuss what ignited their passion to make positive change and their inspirational approaches to impacting public policy.



- **Collin Foster Mays:** college student, author & cohost of radio program "Life in the D"
- **Jeremy Moss:** youngest Southfield City Council Member (elected at age of 25)
- **Rebecca Thompson:** founder of "Ready Set Run" - political training and mentoring program for young women
- **Graham Jones:** Southfield Optimist Club - youth leadership and education programs
- **Kierra K. Williams:** Michigan Princess (2011 - 2012), started an "Adopt a Grandparent Program"

Tickets also available at the door. For an accurate head count, please confirm attendance by calling the League Office at **248-594-6602**.

Registration for Nov. 13 Appetizer Party/Panel of young leaders

Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

No. attending _____ Amount Enclosed _____ **Please make checks payable to: LWVOA**

Mail to: LWVOA Office, 725 S. Adams Rd., Rm 292, Birmingham, MI 48009

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& Barbara Rosalik - Education
Tera Moon - Webmaster

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Barbara Rosalik, Chair
Pat Szura

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: Randa Keener

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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

These last few months of pre-election League activities have been both exciting and exhausting. Now with just two weeks before the election, our work is leveling off; but the work of each citizen to get out there and vote is paramount. With the interest shown in this election, I believe our citizens will rise to the occasion and make their voices heard.

Our presidential candidates have certainly expressed their views on health reform, and to help present impartial information on this topic, Renate Soulen and Richard Teets arranged for Marianne Udow-Phillips to speak. Over seventy people showed up for this well-regarded program with many asking if her Power Point slides were available. Tera Moon put them on our website (see page 3).

Our Voter Service and Voter Guide team worked mightily (see pages 4-5), and their work was rewarded when the Guides were snapped up like a racy novel. The six ballot proposals have had many citizens searching for impartial information. We provided this both in our Guides and a record number of speaking requests (see page 6).

The State League did take positions on three of the proposals (you can find these in full at www.LWVMI.org):

Proposal 12-1 A referendum on Public Act 4, the Emergency Manager Law - Vote "No"

Proposal 12-3 To amend the constitution to establish a standard for renewable energy - Vote "Yes"

Proposal 12-5 To amend the constitution to require a 2/3 majority vote to impose new or additional taxes - Vote "No"

Then there is the political advertising we have heard or received in the mail. A few of us are keeping track of this advertising for the Capture the Election campaign which the State League is handling.

To celebrate the end of this election cycle, LWVOA members are gathering for a post-election program. The details are on page 1. I hope you can join us for an easy and enjoyable evening.

Mary Ann Barkach, President

Health Care Presentation Proves Hot Topic

The health care reform session we sponsored at the Bloomfield Township Public Library on Saturday, September 29, 2012 was a resounding success. **Marianne Udow-Phillips, MHSA**, Director of the Center for Healthcare Research & Transformation, a non-profit partnership between the University of Michigan and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, spoke on **Health Care in America – the Affordable Care Act and Other Solutions** to an enthusiastic audience of more than 70 people. Separating fact from fiction, she clarified this complex topic in a balanced thoughtful presentation which was followed by a lively question & answer period.

The importance of understanding this subject, to allow informed voter decisions, was emphasized by both the National and State LWV Presidents, **Elisabeth MacNamara** (center) and **Sue Smith** (left), respectively, shown here with LWVOA President Mary Ann Barkach.



A reception for the speaker, **Marianne Udow-Phillips**, pictured at left, and honored League guests completed the program. The talk was broadcast on Bloomfield Community TV (Comcast channel 15) the week of Oct. 8th and will be available on demand after Oct. 15th; the power point slide set can be seen on our website www.lwvoa.org. See the Event Calendar for a link.

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Leaguers Register Young Voters in Walled Lake

The core of the League of Women Voters spirit is to serve as a nonpartisan political organization, encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. In honoring that mission, members of our Oakland County chapter spent the first week of October engaged in 'hands on' voter registration.

Ensuring that all eligible citizens are enabled to vote is honorable, and the actions conducted under this initiative were particularly valuable because they targeted the registration of those who are newly eligible or will soon be eligible to vote, the coveted "young voter". The goal: engage them early and have an active participant for life.

So earlier this autumn six League members: Mary Ann Barkach, Paula Creed, Carole Elder, Shelley Goldberg, Martha Martin, and Betty Spehar helped to register students at the Walled Lake Central and Walled Lake Northern high schools.

Two dozen students were 'walked through' the registration process and are now able to make sure 'their voices' will be counted on election day.

As Murphy's Law would dictate, the day was not flawless, and a few challenges were experienced. Remember those high school "tornado drills"? You guessed it, one took place in the middle of the registration process (SMILE). There also were a few logistical challenges, including a technical study program which resulted in some students being transferred off-site for the day.

However, the League of Women Voters members had a positive experience, interacting both with the students being registered to vote, as well as the teachers and principal at the school. A foundation was laid, interest has already been expressed in repeating the registration process in future years, and did I mention two dozen newly registered voters are now eligible to participate in the November 2012 elections?

Article submitted by Carole Elder (Edited by VeRonica Mitchell)

Special thanks to Julie Gillikin for this edition's layout.

REGISTRATION ON OTHER FRONTS

At the OCC campuses of Orchard Ridge, Southfield, and Royal Oak, LWVOA and the AAUW registered voters. Judy Bateman and Kath Maisner participated in this project.

At the Wellness Center in Oak Park, Judy Bateman and Mary Ann Barkach registered voters.

At Oakland University, the LWVOA, AAUW, and Rock the Vote registered students. Barb Rosalik represented the LWVOA.

At the 14th District Civic Engagement Coalition, Judy Bateman and Mary Ann Barkach provided registration training for members.



The State Voter Guides



While we were working down here, Eva Packard, the state Voter Service Chair, was laboring to get the LWV of Michigan Voter Guide published. They also experienced record demand for their 95,000 copies. The 40-page Michigan Guide covered the presidential and other federal candidates, all statewide candidates, and the 6 ballot proposals along with the pros and cons.

We placed many LWVMI guides in Oakland County along with the LWVOA guides for students and others who live outside Oakland County.

In addition, Eva spent long hours uploading candidate information for 144 federal and state races into www.VOTE411.org, mentoring Local Leagues as they also used Vote411.org for their local area races, and downloading federal/state races needed by Local Leagues for their printed guides.

THE VOTER GUIDE TALE

A few weeks back, one of our members worried that all of our printed Voter Guides might not be used. A foolish concern indeed! In fact, by October 18, almost all of the 30,000 LWVOA voter guides were taken, and people were asking for more!

Deb Horner, mother of three and a full time employee at the University of Michigan, again found time to shepherd this project through to its conclusion. The Guide was 64 pages long – the longest ever – due in part to many school board elections now being held in November. With the Guide at the maximum page count for a printed guide, a decision was made to just list the wording of the six statewide ballot proposals and point readers to our website to get the pros and cons.

Deb along with helpers, Ann Edwards, Pat Szura, and Margaret Kanost, headed to the printer to proofread. Then the fun began. The printer was a few days late getting all the Guides delivered to libraries and city halls, and our office phone never stopped ringing. Patricia Finn went to the office one day to face 60 phone calls – mostly for Voter Guides but also for speakers and other election information.

Webmaster Tera Moon, a full-time librarian, who had been keeping our candidate forum schedule up to date, uploaded LWVOA Voter Guides. The Guides covered 200 local races and proposals, and were also linked to LWVMI's State Guide for 34 federal and state races relevant to Oakland County voters.

And let's not forget Ann Edwards, who also works, who mailed the Guides to our members and contributors, and Ann, Mary Howarth and others who distributed Guides to various colleges, offices, etc.

This was a major effort. But it is gratifying to know how people rely on our non-partisan voter information.

The full Oakland County printed Guide, and individual Voter Guides for each race in Oakland County, are available online at our website, www.LWVOA.org, as are Candidate Forum videos or cable times.

For in-depth analysis of the state proposals by the nonpartisan Citizens Research Council, go to <http://elections.crcmich.org>. To check facts in ads, visit www.michigantruthsquad.com.

Out, About & Informing the Community Voter Suppression & Ballot Proposals

As early as last summer, LWVOA received five requests for speakers, mostly on voter suppression and the electoral process in general. As fall approached, the call for speakers accelerated with increased interest in the ballot proposals. People are hungry for honest, impartial information and we try to fulfill that need. Below are the requests we have filled in September and October.

- Adult Learning Institute, Farmington Hills - Voter Suppression and Ballot Issues - *Sue Smith and Mary Ann Barkach*
- Fleishman Residence, Farmington Hills – Ballot Issues - *Mary Ann Barkach*
- National Active and Retired Federal Employees, Clawson – Ballot Issues - *Mary Ann Barkach*
- Ameinu, Oak Park - Voter Fraud/Voter Suppression – *Mary Ann Barkach*
- Waterford AAUW – Ballot Issues – *Kath Maisner and Mary Ann Barkach*
- Catholic Caucus, Oak Park – A showing of *Patriocracy** plus ballot issues – *Mary Ann Barkach*
- City of Auburn Hills Senior Center – Ballot Issues – *Jeff Jenks*
- Temple Emanuel, Oak Park – Ballot issues – *Mary Ann Barkach*
- Junior League of Birmingham – Ballot Issues – *Barbara Suhay and Judy Bateman*
- St. Michaels of Rochester - Ballot Issues – *Mary Ann Barkach*
- InForum, Southfield – Ballot Issues – *Mary Ann Barkach*

**Patriocracy is a 50 minute documentary about the polarization of the country which was aired at the LWV National Convention. It is also going to be shown at St. John Fisher in Rochester*

Gilda Jacobs Speech Highlights FALL LUNCHEON



On October 22, Dorothy Conrad and Marge Polidori once again put on their Fall Luncheon which raises funds for our League activities. It is always a special event giving members an opportunity to enjoy good food and good company before listening to a speaker.

Gilda Jacobs, President and CEO of the Michigan League for Public Policy, spoke on issues of gender and poverty, saying that Michigan has an uneven playing field. The gap between men and women's salaries is among the largest in the country at 23%. Women are more likely than men to live in poverty in every age group. In 2011, 2/3 of women with children worked. Women who grow up in poverty will probably live in poverty as adults and will probably need

some assistance.

At the same time, child care assistance grants are decreasing, and child poverty is on the rise.

What can you do? Urge that the Earned Income Tax Credit be raised from 6% to at least 10%. Gov. Snyder has indicated a willingness to do this as the Michigan economy improves. We should work for more funding for the Child Care Assistance program. She also suggested that the state drop the asset test for food assistance; it is unnecessary and the money comes from the federal government, not from the state coffers. Jacobs indicated that we get the most bang for the buck from childhood programs, and education funding should be increased.

CANDIDATE FORUM FRENZY

How do they do it? Jerry Burden, Ann Edwards, and Judy Bateman coordinated 24 Oakland County candidate forums covering races for U.S. Congress, State House, County Commissioners, Township, City and Village officials, Judges and School District boards. They could have done more if they could somehow have duplicated themselves!

In June and July, **Primary Election forums** were held for West Bloomfield Township and Southfield Township officials. A forum was held for County Commission District 18, State Rep District 40 in Birmingham, and State Rep District 35 in Southfield.

Judicial forums were held for the Primary Election for a Non-incumbent Circuit Court seat and three District Court races. For the General Election, forums were held for the Incumbent Circuit Court seats and two more District Court races. All of the forums were co-sponsored with the Oakland County Bar Association and the Free Press. Linda DePoorter and Jerry Burden moderated with Judy Bateman and Kath Maisner helping.

In September and October, **School District** forums held included: Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Huron Valley, and Ferndale. **Other forums** included: the 9th Congressional District, Milford Supervisor, Beverly Hills Village, Independence Township Trustees, Sylvan Lake City Council, and a Royal Oak Town Hall on city and school proposals.

Moderators were Tera Moon, Jerry Burden, Judy Bateman, Mary Howarth, and Linda DePoorter. Others helping were: Laura Gogola, Kath Maisner, Dorothy Conrad, Carole Elder, and Carol Beeman. All of these events were cablecast or available online.

Eva Packard was a panelist at the Council of Home Owners Association forum for US 14, State Rep 37, and County Commissioner 13, 14, & 21. LWV Northwest Wayne's US 11 and LWV Troy's MI 41 and County Comm. 11, 16, & 20 are also viewable.

The Rochester area was handled by Ann Edwards with State Rep 45th district forums for the Primary and General elections which were broadcast live and taped for cable. Carla Gribbs and Kristin Bull moderated with Karen DeGrendel, Mary Howarth, and Ann Edwards assisting.

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Time Dated Material Enclosed

Calendar of Events

For elections, see Voter Guides and Candidate Forums on www.LWVOA.org, www.OCBA.org (additional judicial race info), and www.VOTE411.org (federal and state races).

- Tues Nov. 6 7 am-8 pm General Election Day**
- Tues Nov. 13 6 pm The New Torch Bearers of Public Policy: Millennium Generation Leaders**
Regency Manor, 25228 West 12 Mile Road, Southfield 48034
\$15 includes appetizers, cash bar (Registration Form on Page 1)
- Tues Nov. 27 7pm LWVOA Board Meeting** – Office Conference Room, 725 S. Adams Road, Birmingham, 48009
- Sat Jan. 19 10 am State Program Planning Meeting and Brunch**
at the home of Vicki Lange, 115 Linda Knoll, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304
- Fri-Sun May 17-19 League of Women Voters of Michigan State Convention**
Lansing, Michigan
- Sat June 1 10 am LWV Oakland Area Annual Meeting**