



# Oakland Voter

League of Women Voters Oakland Area  
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2012-2013 Issue 5

Mar-Apr 2013

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.



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MICHIGAN,  
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OAKLAND AREA,  
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY, AND  
OAKLAND COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION**

*present*

## **Hidden Money in Judicial Selection: A Threat to Impartial Justice?**

A forum to explore problems with the way that Michigan selects judges and Supreme Court Justices and proposals for reform

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Monday, March 11, 2013**

**Oakland University, Gold Room C, Oakland Center**

**2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester, MI 48309**

**Panel Discussion:** Problems with Michigan Judicial Selection and Proposed Reforms

### **Panelists:**

- The Honorable Marilyn Kelly, Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, Retired
- Rich Robinson, Executive Director, the Michigan Campaign Finance Network

**Moderator:** Gerald J. Gleason II, Director, Board of Directors, Oakland County Bar Association

For more information contact: Linda White at the LWVMI: 517-484-5383 or at [faircourts@lwvmi.org](mailto:faircourts@lwvmi.org)

Admission is free

**This event is made possible with funds from the Joyce Foundation.**

**[WWW.LWVMI.ORG](http://WWW.LWVMI.ORG)**

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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: Randa Keener

**LWVOA ON FACEBOOK!**

If you are not already a member of Facebook, you can sign up at

[www.FACEBOOK.com](http://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**

2012 was the year of Voter Service. 2013 is shaping up to be the year of advocacy. Every time I pick up the newspaper, some legislation is being proposed either in Lansing or in Washington which is of interest to the League - gun control, health care, hidden money in campaigns, education reform, immigration, and on and on.

One of the pre-convention events at State Convention will be "Taking Action in the League: Issues Briefing at the Capital." Attending convention will give you a chance to meet not only Sue Smith, our State President, but also Will Hathaway, our first Executive Director.

The call has also gone out to interview as many of our legislators as we can, so both we and Judy Karandjeff, the LWVMI Advocacy Vice President, will have a better understanding of their views. These interviews are always interesting, and I hope to hear from you that you would like to participate in this endeavor. (See page 5.)

On the local level, the past couple of months have been challenging for LWVOA. First yours truly managed to fall off the edge of my bed and broke a hip. So now most of my LWV work is done at my kitchen table, with Eva Packard and Judy Bateman driving me to a few meetings, and Patricia Finn filling in for me at the program planning meeting. But I am getting more mobile by the day and will soon be driving again.

Then one day Sue Abrams, who manages our office, went in and found a leak in the ceiling, some tiles down and water dripping on a file cabinet. The carpeting was wet along with some of the boxes of archives, and some copy paper. The good news is that Gary Andrus, the owner of the shopping center, was extremely obliging, repaired the tile, cleaned the carpet, painted part of the wall, and got everything back in order. Our thanks go to both Sue and Gary for their diligence.

Life in the League is never dull!

**Mary Ann Barkach, President**

## DMA Program on Emergency Managers Set for April

Mary Bugeia, President of the Detroit Metropolitan Area LWV, and our own Karen DeGrendel are planning the yearly program which DMA offers to all the Leagues in the area. This year the topic is:

### Implications of Emergency Managers, good or bad

**Saturday, April 20, 10:00 am – 12:00**

**Henry Ford Centennial Library**

**16301 Michigan Avenue**

(on the south side between Southfield and Greenfield)

**Dearborn, MI 48126**

**phone: 313-943-2330**

**Panelists to be determined. Mark your calendars now.**

## CALL TO STATE CONVENTION

LWVMI President Sue Smith has issued a first call to State Convention which will be held May 17-19 at the Radisson Hotel in Lansing, MI. State Convention is always busy, fun and informative. It is a chance to meet Leaguers from across the state, attend workshops, dine around, enjoy speakers, and, of course, conduct basic League business including adopting state program and budgets. We encourage board members, off board members and newcomers to attend. If you are interested in being a delegate, contact Mary Ann Barkach, phone 248/474-2353, or email [mbarkach@yahoo.com](mailto:mbarkach@yahoo.com) for more information.

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## **Kudos from the Nominating Committee**

It is time for the LWVOA nominating committee to find a slate of officers for the 2013-2015 term of office.

First of all we want to thank all of you who worked so hard in the last election. It was not easy to provide all that information about the candidates and ballot proposals. Leaders have been super busy with forums, events and producing Voter Guides online and for distribution to get the information out there. We are proud of the job you did to make the League the most trusted source of nonpartisan, unbiased voter information. You worked hard to create a better informed electorate. We thank all who volunteered.

We need to hear from all of you. We want to know your concerns and recommendations for developing a list of leaders to fill out our board. We know we have people with the skills in administration, finance, programs, advocacy, public relations, and membership. We need your help to continue our great work. The next year should not be so demanding

Please use the form below to list the names of people, including yourself, who you think might be willing to serve on our LWVOA board. Please call or email Barb Rosalik, Nominating Committee Chair, with your suggestions at 248-373-0077 or [brosalik@comcast.net](mailto:brosalik@comcast.net). Other members of the Nominating Committee are: Pat Szura, Sheryl Mitchell and Eva Packard.

### **POSITIONS TO BE FILLED (2 year terms)**

**President:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** \_\_\_\_\_

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1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Nominating committee**

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_ **plus 2 members:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Want to Meet Your Legislator?

It's that time when Local Leagues are asked to interview their State Representatives and Senators. There are two reasons for doing so. One is to build a relationship between your League and your legislators. The other is to gather information for conducting advocacy in Lansing.

The State League has been doing a lot of advocacy the past two years. Action Alerts encourage members to contact their legislators or the governor on a particular position. Even if your legislator doesn't agree with the League's position, it is very helpful to understand his/her position when you later contact him/her to discuss a League position.

This is a great opportunity for a newer League member to join a more experienced one for "on the job" training. **The purpose of these interviews is not to argue League positions, but to hear your legislators' views.** The interviews are for internal use only, and will not be published in the Voter.



We have the six questions to ask, some background materials and the reply form. There are questions about campaign finance, redistricting, judicial selection, education funding, and the fracking process. The background materials will not make you an expert but should give you a sense of the issues legislators face. Feel free to ask follow-up questions not indicated in the questionnaire to learn more about what your legislator considers to be priorities and solutions.

**We need at least two people for each interview**, one to ask the questions and one to take notes. Oakland Area has 5 State Senators and 14 State Representatives. **You can send a list of the questions before the interview.** Do not send the background materials, because these are to help you feel more comfortable asking a question in an area unfamiliar to you.

Schedule the interview on a date, time and location that works for the legislator and yourselves. Often interviews are held in a library, a coffee shop, restaurant, or at the legislator's office.

If you are interested in taking part in this interesting endeavor, please call or email Mary Ann Barkach, 248-376-6202, [mbarkach@yahoo.com](mailto:mbarkach@yahoo.com).

**Please send the completed report(s) to the state office by April 1, 2013**, at LWVMI, 600 W. St. Joseph St., Suite 3G, Lansing, MI 48933, phone: 517-484-5383. If you plan to do interviews, but do not have them completed by April 1, please tell the office which legislators you are planning to cover. LWVMI may send the questionnaire to legislators who will not otherwise be interviewed.

## PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING UPDATE

The State program planning meeting held at Vicki Lange's home in January was lively and generated a lot of conversation. After enjoying brunch, Patricia Finn led the discussion. The fourteen participants sat down and reviewed every current League position and agreed to retain all of them.

Members approved of the work of the Midland LWV which urges an update of the "Education: Structure, Financing and Goals" position. They also approved of merging and updating the three state education positions into one. The other two positions are on Teacher Certification and Public School Academies. The new EAA for poorly performing schools and Charter Schools generated discussion,

especially concerning oversight, control and accountability and the need to have them be responsible to the State Superintendent and State Board of Education guidelines as all other schools are.

The request for concurrence by the Grand Traverse Area LWV on Agricultural Migrant Workers was rejected because members believed the position statement was too vague. It was also noted that a path for legal status was already in the LWVUS immigration position.

LWVMI will combine our views with the views of other Michigan Leagues in making their recommendations at State Convention in May.

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### Survey shows 81 percent of Michigan primary care physicians have capacity, and are willing to serve more patients, including those with Medicaid

The Center for Healthcare Research & Transformation (CHRT), directed by Marianne Udow-Phillips who gave such a good talk for us last fall, has released two studies relevant to the issue of Medicaid expansion in Michigan.

In October 2012 CHRT published research showing that the economic impact of Medicaid expansion could **save** Michigan nearly one billion dollars over 10 years – while extending health insurance to more than 600,000 Michigan citizens – if the state expands Medicaid eligibility beginning in 2014 as provided under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA promises the federal government will pay all costs for 3 years for residents added to Medicaid in states that raise income eligibility, 90% from 2017-2020, and not go lower.



To address concerns that Michigan primary care physicians could not handle the resultant increase in patients, the CHRT, in partnership with the Child Health Evaluation and Research Unit at the University of Michigan, conducted a statewide survey showing that 81% of Michigan primary care physicians have capacity and are willing to serve more patients, including those with Medicaid. These results were published late January 2013.

Primary care physicians surveyed included family physicians, internal medicine practitioners, and pediatricians. The survey was conducted from October – December, 2012.

Significant findings from the survey include:

Continued on Page 7

## Medicaid Survey cont'd -

- Most Michigan primary care physicians (81%) anticipate being able to add newly insured patients to their practices.
- Among those physicians that anticipate being able to accept newly insured patients, more than 90% expect to have capacity for new Medicaid patients. Nearly all family physicians (95%), pediatricians (95%), and internal medicine practitioners (94%) expect to accept patients with new Medicaid coverage.
- Even among physicians who do not currently take new Medicaid patients, most indicated that they would take new Medicaid patients (84% of pediatricians, 89% of family physicians, and 88% of general medicine practitioners).
- Almost all primary care physicians who currently accept new Medicaid patients reported that they would have capacity for newly enrolled Medicaid patients in the future (99% to 100% depending on type of primary care).

For more information, and to review survey results in more detail, visit: [www.chrt.org/](http://www.chrt.org/)

Governor Snyder, using the CHRT data, recommended Medicaid expansion in his budget address on 2-7-13. He further proposed that half of the money saved due to federal funding of the expansion should be put into a health savings account for future needs when the federal funding diminishes.

## **Local Leaders: Funding reforms needed to avoid service cuts** **According to Center for Local, State, & Urban Policy**

ANN ARBOR—Local government leaders in Michigan report that the way their jurisdictions are funded requires significant reform to maintain services in the wake of the Great Recession, according to a University of Michigan survey by the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. Key findings of the poll are:

- Fewer than half of local leaders, or 43 percent, believe the system of funding local government in Michigan would allow them to maintain their current packages of services in the future, even if the economy continues to improve.
- Overall, just 26 percent of local leaders surveyed think the current funding system would allow them to improve current services or provide new services.
- A majority, or 58 percent, of local officials believe the state's system of funding local government needs significant reform. That number increases to 77 percent for the largest municipalities.
- Of the 58 percent who say reform is needed: 89 percent cite the gasoline tax; 83 percent point to the sales tax; 82 percent cite the Headlee Amendment; 81 percent say Proposal A needs reform; and 80 percent say revenue sharing needs reform.
- The percentage of all jurisdictions that were less able to meet their fiscal needs has fallen significantly since peaking at 61 percent in 2010. Last year, 34 percent of all jurisdictions reported that they were less able to meet their fiscal needs. Despite this recent improvement, many local leaders foresee trouble ahead if the funding system is not reformed.

The study, conducted April-June 2012, involved surveys sent via hardcopy and the Internet to top elected and appointed officials in all counties, cities, villages and townships in Michigan. A total of 1,329 jurisdictions returned valid surveys, resulting in a 72 percent response rate. The survey had a margin of error of 1.43 percentage points either way.

### **Related Link:**

Survey: .pdf: <http://closup.umich.edu/files/mpps-spring-2012-funding-local-govt.pdf>



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# Time Dated Material Enclosed

## Calendar of Events

Details will be posted in Event Calendar on [www.LWVOA.org](http://www.LWVOA.org)

- Fri Feb. 15 noon** **Birthday Lunch & Legislative Update with State Rep. Vicki Barnett**  
at The Village Club, 190 E. Long Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304;  
reservations required: \$20 Please call LWVOA Office: 248-594-6602.
- Mon Mar 11 7:00 pm** **Forum on Judicial Selection** with MI Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly  
and Rich Robinson, Michigan Campaign Finance Network Executive Director  
Oakland University, Gold Room C, Oakland Center, 2200 N. Squirrel Road,  
Rochester, MI 48309
- Wed Mar 20 7:00 pm** **LWVOA Board of Directors meeting**, Conference Room – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
725 S. Adams Road, Birmingham, MI 48009
- Sat Apr 20 10 am – 12** **Detroit Metropolitan Area LWV** presents Implications of Emergency Managers,  
Henry Ford Centennial Library, 16301 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, MI 48126
- 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** at Plum Hollow County Club,  
21631 Lahser Road, Southfield, MI 48033