

Subj: **LWVGP Voter: June-July 2013**
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Grosse Pointe|VOTER

Serving the Communities of
 Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Shores,
 Grosse Pointe Woods, and Harper Woods

Coming Up Activities Save these Dates:

Wed, Aug 14, 7:00 PM
 LWVGP Board Meeting
 at Central Library

Thurs, Sep 19, 5:30-8:00
 Kickoff Meeting/Fundraiser
 at Tompkins Center
 Windmill Pointe Park, GPP

FYI...

There will be NO VOTER in July. The next one will be after the August board meeting, which is August 14.

Dues Reminder

Please remit your dues ASAP for League year 2013/2014 to

32 Lake Shore Dr.
 GPF 48236

\$60/individual; \$90/household
 In League,
 JA

Detroit LWV Voter Service Unit: Vote411.org

The Detroit League may have officially disbanded in the spring of 2012, but the need for voter education is still significantly there. This became evident during the election of fall 2012. Local Wayne County Leagues provided the information for Detroit voters that they craved.

Betsy Cushman from Dearborn/Dearborn Heights took the weight of the task. She

June-July Issue

From the Prez

LWVGP's programs, Voter services committee and efforts, our Annual Meeting, LWVMI Convention, advocacy activities and SO many wonderful goals met, activities accomplished! We have had a great League year. Thank you to all of the board, off-board, support members, committee chairs and all of our members for your contributions to make our League what it is. Thank you to new members in these positions for your efforts to continue our mission.

This newsletter is full of good League information from Convention titled "Empowering Our Voices." We are empowered.

We have had a good year-have a great summer and look for our next newsletter in August.

The new LWVMI sponsored MLD (Membership-Leadership Development) program will be a practice and program that is the focus for the upcoming year from National to State to you and me. More information will be presented to you by this fall. Part of my responsibilities as VP of Membership on the LWVMI Board is to implement the viable practices of this program. I will be coming to you for partnership in the vision and goals.

Thank you and thank you for being part of this strong LWVGP.

In League,
 Christina

LWV Detroit Metro Area Annual Meeting

The LWV Detroit Metro Area Annual Meeting was held at the Fairlane Club in Dearborn. During the business meeting, some monumental changes to the ILO's (Inter-League Organization) structure was voted on and accepted. The board structure is the most significant change.

The nominating committee was unsuccessful in filling the board vacancies this year which include the offices of President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Secretary and two Directors. Members currently in that capacity were unable to continue in the roles.

A special meeting was held in April 2013 to discuss the future of DMA without the traditional board positions filled. LWVMI President, Susan Smith led the discussion that included current DMA board members. It

answered 180 calls and sent information to residents. Paula Bowman from Northwest Wayne County gave ballot proposal presentations as did Martha Shumaker and I from Grosse Pointe. We also collected names of people that were very interested in assisting in redeveloping a Detroit unit.

This year, through the unyielding and energetic efforts of Paula Bowman, meetings were held to bring together the interested Detroit voters. This project has developed so profoundly, that a core of Detroit residents are providing candidate information on Vote411.org for the primary elect on 6 August and intend to do the same for the General Election in November. They have become LWV MAL (Members-at-Large) to access the LWV Vote411 on-line voter information site. LWVDMA has provided financial support for their subscription.

A task this huge-mainly due to the number of candidates-and to teach people about Vote411.org has been directed by Betsy Cushman (DDH), Eva Packard (OA and LWVMI), Don Mack (DDH) and of course Paula Bowman (NWC). ANYONE INTERESTED IN LENDING A HAND WITH THIS PROJECT, PLEASE CALL ME AT 313.882.9006.

KUDOS TO PAULA AND THE CREW!!!

Christina Schlitt

From the Convention

Maryann Mahaffey Award - Winner Fran Schonenberg

At convention the League honors those members who have distinguished themselves by recent service or over their league career.



The winner of the 2013 Maryann Mahaffey Community Service Award was Fran Schonenberg from Grosse Pointe League (pictured above with LWVMI President Susan Smith)

The Maryann Mahaffey Community Service Award honors an individual for

was determined that DMA does have a viable role in the region and will continue operating. Instead of a traditional board of officers to run the ILO, a committee of shared leadership will operate in that function.

The proposed Shared Leadership Committee will consist of:

Carolyn Buell (DDH) - Treasure with term ending 2014
Kathy Gapa (DDH) and **Angela Ryan** (NWC) are Directors with terms ending 2014

Four members have volunteered to be directors on the committee for one year.

They are: **Judy Bateman** (OA), **Fran Schonenberg** (GP), **Mary Bugeia** (DDH) and **Karen DeGrendel** (OA)

In addition, it has been suggested to include the Presidents of the 5 Oakland and Wayne Count Leagues or their designees. This Leadership Committee will meet in September to structure their function and future.

LWVDMA voted to financially support the new Detroit voter services organization with funds from the ed fund. (More about Detroit in this newsletter.)

Amber Toth, Community Outreach Director for the Center for Michigan, was the featured speaker. Amber discussed the feedback from Michigan residents about our public education system during the Center's Community Conversations and how they relate to the Michigan legislature's actions. Amber encouraged everyone to read their on-line newsletter, Bridge. It is an instrument for one of the finest gatherings of excellent journalism. If you do not already subscribe, go to www.thecenterformichigan.net

From the Convention

Belle Ringer Awards

In every Local League there are members whose values, service and leadership set them apart. The BELLE Ringer Awards are noncompetitive and inclusive and cite the outstanding activities of members for advocacy, voter services, engagement and strategic planning. The following members from LWVGP were recognized at the state convention.

Advocacy

Ann Nicholson

For her role in providing information, forming a study group within LWVGP and organizing a town hall meeting (to be held 24 April 2013) on the ever evolving education issues in our community and state-wide. Also working with LWVMI on this very issue.

Voter Service

Susan Leithauser-Yee

For organizing 6 candidate forums and ballot information forums and supplying the information for our local Vote411 during the elections of November 2012 in her very first year in this capacity.

Member Engagement

Beth Martin

For her effective management and informational input on our website as our diligent webmaster. Beth has a very unique and effective perspective of the way and depth of information to present through our

demonstrated outstanding commitment to their community and its citizens and who exemplify the principals of League and League leadership.

LWVGP is proud of the contributions that Fran Schonenberg has made over the years and was proud to submit her name and accomplishments to the LWVMI for consideration in this award. Countless numbers of LWVGP members submitted their insights and experiences with Fran's leadership accomplishments to solidify that the award should be presented to her.

Some of the points considered for the award include demonstrating outstanding commitment to community and exemplifying League principals. Fran has been an exemplary community leader through the League.

She developed projects starting within the League that transformed into innovated community projects. They start with her leadership in forming the Citizens for Recycling that ended up with the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods having weekly curbside pick-up of recyclables ahead of most other communities in the state of Michigan. Just recently, Fran revisited the issue by organizing a group of League and community members to visit to the recycling center to view the integrity of the process and that it continues as intended.

As that part of the project became established, Fran lead the formation of the Citizens for Recycling that turned their attention to the use and disposal of pesticides. A League committee called the Pesticide Information Team was formed to provide speakers and information to citizens about their rights to notification of pesticide use, how to reduce use, and the related health and water quality issues.

Fran contributed significantly to development of the Services for Older Citizens (SOC) through efforts with the LWVGP members. Fran championed the cause through a local cable television program featuring interests and services for our senior citizens.

Fran currently serves on the board of D-AAA that is the Detroit Area Agency on Ageing, which is a state and federal funded agency for developing and providing of services for the senior community.

Fran was a member of the Grosse Pointe

web site.

Strategic Planning

Connie Frey

For her foresight of the future of our League in the diligent, tedious development of our budget and by leading a committee for multiple years to present budgets to board and membership.

From the Convention

Advocacy Workshop

The Friday Workshop on Advocacy was an all day affair covering a number of topics including:

The MI Public Education Finance Act of 2013 with Peter Ruddell, author of the 340 page bill.

At present in MI, we have district 'ownership of students', with funding going to the district. This bill would shift the funding to follow the students whatever their choice of venue, including on-line learning options. A framework for performance-based funding would be used. Early graduation scholarships would be rewarded of \$2,500 for each semester. The payment of school aid funding may occur in the fall after school has started and programs have been offered, or cut. This is a complex issue with a great deal more detail in the bill.

The Affordable Care Act with Brett Williams from the MI Consumers for Healthcare.

The cost of health care in the U.S. is hovering around \$8,000 per person per year, double the health care costs in Canada, The ACA supports a Health Care Marketplace and the pooling of small businesses for better rates. Medicaid would be expanded to 133% of the Federal Poverty Level. The ACA would not add to the deficit because of the tax hike for folks making over \$200,000 (single) or \$250,000 (couples). MI did not buy into the Medicaid expansion initially, but has done so recently.

State Board of Education Update with Kathleen Straus

Cyber Schools have over 50,000 students in MI at present. Straus is passionately in favor of supporting the public schools. "Each charter school that opened takes away from public schools". With the continuing reduction of school aid to the districts, schools have had to curtail programs, fire staff and make do with much less! The state then labels the districts broken; many are in danger of being taken over by the state. House Bill 5922, passed in the Lame Duck session in 2011, provides a "reinvention of public education".

Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) in Michigan with James Cliff

There is a great deal of controversy over the issue of fracking. There are 52 permanent wells in northern MI. For each well, 2 million gallons of water is needed, mixed with 100,000 gallons of chemicals. In our tourist-oriented state, our cold rivers are in danger of losing fish species if the temperature rises 5% to 10%. MI is better off than some other states because we have both stricter regulations and better bedrock configurations. One of the biggest drawbacks is the flow back water from fracking tanks that is re-injected into the brine layer and may contaminate ground water. Regs need to be tightened and closely monitored.

Futuring Committee in the 1990s. This group met often to discuss and plan for the future development and maintaining the Grosse Pointes. Outcomes of this unit have affected the continued growth of the Grosse Pointes in positive ways even to this day.

Fran's community projects have started through the LWVGP and have grown to the entire community becoming involved.

Fran was involved in voter services much of her time in the League. She participated in and helped organize candidate forums. She served in the role of moderator often; also in question sorting; and basically whatever was needed to run candidate forums.

Fran is always ready to teach new members the mission of the League and direct their special skills for the League programs and projects. Fran encouraged and inspired many women and men to become not only members, but to be involved in the League, AAUW, SOC and many other community organizations and projects. One League member with accounting skills was enlisted by Fran to help seniors in the community with their taxes; that person later served for four years as Treasurer of LWVMI as a result of Fran having submitted her name to the LWVMI Nominating Committee.

Fran was part of the inaugural board in the mid 1980s that developed the LWVGP Education Foundation. She facilitated in the establishment of the bylaws and policies with which we operate now.

Fran served in leadership roles both within the League and outside of the League.

- During Fran's membership in the LWV, she has served as president of the LWV Grosse Pointe from 1979-1981,
- An original and a long-time board member of the LWVGP Ed Fund Board of Directors,
- Serves on the board of LWV DMA
- Served on the board of LWVMI.
- Fran has served in the role of Parliamentarian at LWVMI conventions.
- Fran has also served on the Grosse Pointe Farms City Council for a number of years and ran at a time when not many women were even considering the position.
- Fran is currently on the board of D-

This day was fascinating, well worth going a day early to the convention. This summary is just a tip of the iceberg; please let me know if you wish to discuss this further. I certainly appreciate being one of the LWVGP delegates.

Judy Morlan, delegate

From the Convention

Powering Our Voices Workshop

This three part workshop stressed the importance of visibility, and offered ideas for multiple ways to spread the news of the League's important work in the community. Where should we publicize? What should we publicize? What are some alternative ways to publicize that maybe we don't think of as publicity at all?

What is our "elevator speech" - that succinct reply when someone asks us "What does the League of Women Voters do?"

Part II of the workshop explained how a newsletter is put together using Constant Contact, which is the template our League is using for The Voter. This is a very easy to use method for construction of a newsletter and requires little technical skill to make a very professional looking product.

Part III explained why and how LWVMI uses Facebook to reach out to members who prefer to get their information electronically. Since I do not participate on Facebook, I found this particularly interesting. For a Facebook posting to reach a wide audience, it must have enough value to encourage the few people who might directly see it to either reply, or to pass it on to their wider group of "friends". Facebook keeps track of how far a message travels so the sender can gauge its effectiveness.

Ann Nicholson, delegate

I attended a workshop at the League of Women Voters Convention entitled POWERING OUR VOICES. This workshop specifically focused on Fund Raising, and how to do it effectively. The power point presentation was very thorough, and provided a complete flow chart for analyzing our fund raising efforts, and proscribed a detailed outline for improving/or devising an effective program. If the League is considering a major focus in this direction, I have the materials needed to implement.

In general, I felt that the program would be more effective on a State or National level, where supporters and contributors have many more resources, than the smaller Leagues on a local level: Major donors, Grants, Corporate Sponsorships, etc.

Jan Wells, delegate

From the Convention

Candidate Forum Workshop

The candidate forum workshop led by LWVMI director Susan Gilbert was very informative especially since voter service is such a key part of our mission. Ideas presented such as copy writing any recordings and other tips shared by the attendees will help keep our forums successful.

Connie Frey, delegate

AAA (Detroit Area Agency on Aging).

She has demonstrated a commitment to public service leadership.

- Fran has also served on the Grosse Pointe Farms City Council
- She is on the board of D-AAA.
- Wayne County Community College Eastside Advisory Board since its inception in the 1980s
- Served on various SEMCOG committees
- Host of the Services for Older Citizens (SOC) television program for over 20 years on the local cable channel WMTV5
- Served on the Grosse Pointe Library board throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s

If the need and the subsequent organization was not in existence-Fran got it started and saw to it the community made it functional and continuing.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy.



From the Convention

Attending the LWVMI Convention in Lansing were (left to right): Fran Schonenberg, Jo Ann Kelly, Judy Morlan, Ann Nicholson, Jan Wells, Connie Frey, and Christina Schlitt.



From our Annual Spring Breakfast

Mary Vitolins, Cynthia Warner, Judy Morlan, Ann Nicholson, Margit Jackson and Connie Frey (standing alongside LWVGP President Cristina Schlitt) were honored at the annual Spring breakfast in May. Also honored were Jo Ann Kelly and Aphie Roumell.



League Links

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