



League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County
Established in Livonia in 1960

VOTER

www.LWVNorthwestwayne.org

Serving: Canton, Garden City, Livonia, Northville,
Plymouth, Redford, Wayne and Westland

JANUARY, 2016

Money in Politics and LWVUS Program Planning

*Meeting set for Saturday, January 16, 2016, 10:00 am
Kerby's Koney Island*

37155 Six Mile Road (SE corner of 6 Mile and Newburgh—near Busch's).



Our first meeting of 2016 will deal with two important topics:

1. Reaching Consensus on the Money in Politics Study.

The Money In Politics Committee conducted two very productive meetings in December. The members include Ann Abdoo, Linda Curry, Judy Patrick, Rachel Rion and Angela Ryan. After consultation with the LWVUS office regarding some confusing questions, the committee was able to complete their proposed responses to the study questions at the December 14 meeting. With a total of 33 distinct questions to consider, the committee established a process for addressing them that allowed the successful completion of the task in approximately four hours. The committee will share their proposed responses with all members at the January 16th meeting and the group will hopefully reach consensus. Submission of the question responses to LWVUS is due by February 1, 2016.

2. LWVUS Program Planning.

Several months before each biennial LWVUS convention (set for June 16-19, 2016 in Washington DC), members of Leagues all over the country are asked to contribute ideas and suggestions for the 'program' LWVUS should follow in the next 2 years. We review the national positions to determine if any should be updated or withdrawn, and suggest studies for new topics. National League bylaws define program as "Action to implement the Principles and those governmental issues chosen by the convention for concerted study or concurrence and action..." The League Principles are concepts of government supported by the League and "are the authorization for adoption of national, state and local program." Action to implement those principles guides every League activity. All our work is program and, in planning for the next year or two, all our work is relevant to the decisions that delegates to a convention must make. See the article on page 4 for more information on Program Planning and the current "Positions in Brief" on pages 5-7.

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

The work of the League is financed by the dues of members and by contributions from citizens in the community.



President's Message

Happy new year, Members. I hope the holidays were enjoyable for you.

After a brief break, it's time to gear up for League activities again. We have our first meeting of the year scheduled for January 16 at 10 a.m. at Kerby's Koney Island in Livonia. It's been challenging recently to find a place to meet. Our last two places have closed. Kerby's has been there for quite a few years, so I hope they'll be around for the foreseeable future. At this meeting, we'll be discussing the questions for the Money in Politics portion of the current National study. A committee has reviewed the questions in detail, and they will present their suggested responses at this meeting. This will be your opportunity to learn more about this study and provide input on the responses. We will also address our Program Planning for the coming year.

I expect this will be a busy election year. While we won't be involved in any Presidential debates, I'm sure we'll have much to do with state and local elections. There are changes coming to Vote411 that will enable us to reach even more voters than we've reached in prior years.

We will remain vigilant about bills proposed in the State legislature that are detrimental to voting rights and/or voter education. There is also a Supreme Court case to watch, [Evenwel v. Abbott](#). The court could decide that state legislative districts should be decided by the total number of voters rather than the total population.

We are moving along with the Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) Program. Board member Sue Wabeke dropped off the MLD Committee, and Board member Laurie Kelly has joined the Committee. We continue to have monthly conversations with our coach, State Board member Christina Schlitt, and devise ways to make our League bigger and stronger.

League Voter Services VP, Paula Bowman, and I will be meeting later this month with representatives from Belleville who are interested in starting a new League. Paula has also been working with people in Detroit, where a League unit has been started. It's exciting to see the League growing in the state, at a time when other groups are shrinking and/or disbanding.

Although the State League's initial series of Redistricting presentations has ended, their intent is to continue our efforts to educate the public about redistricting. If you know of a group that would be interested in having a presentation, please let me know by email at cruiserryan@ameritech.net or by phone at 734-591-0995.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting on January 16.

Angela Ryan

UPDATED ROSTER

Included with this *Voter* is the current LWV Northwest Wayne County membership roster. Only members are receiving the list. If any of your contact information needs updating, please contact Paula Bowman at paulabowman9000@gmail.com. Email addresses, especially, are important since they are used to deliver information to you from both the LWV of Michigan and LWV of the United States.



THANK YOU

The League thanks Sue Wabeke for hosting a delightful holiday party on December 13th at her Plymouth home.

Plenty of members and significant others attended and enjoyed each other's company as well as delicious holiday treats. Though determined to avoid LWV business, it did creep into a number of conversations since current political events play such an important role in the lives of so many of us. We also thank Mary Visos for assisting Sue in putting on such a fine party.

CONGRATULATIONS

Hats off to League member, Susan Rowe, who won the November election in her City of Wayne. After serving as a City Council member for several terms, Susan is now the new Mayor! We know that she has the leadership skills and professional demeanor to do an excellent job in this challenging position.



WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR DONORS

During this most recent dues renewal term, numerous donations were made to the League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County—both to our operating account and to our Education Fund. We are grateful not only for your membership dues, but also for the added donations which allow us to continue our mission of providing voter education and advocating on good government issues. Listed below are those recent donors, as well as other 2015 donors, some of whom were “Auction Angels” (cash instead of a donation or a purchase at the auction), or those who made donations earlier in the year.

We thank the following:

Nancy White
Laura Callow
Susan Rowe
Roberta Young
Betty McCully
Laurie Kelly
James Amar
Esther Friedrichs
Diane Wittl
Rachel Rion
Jean Norman
Megan Chenoweth
Angela Ryan
Paula Bowman
Natalie Mosher
Anonymous (\$100)
Anonymous (\$2,000)

We are also grateful to the many people who attended the November auction and, thanks to their purchases, helped us raise over \$1,200. We appreciate the support of all of you.

**MESSAGE FROM LWVUS BOARD RE:
LWVUS PROGRAM PLANNING**
(condensed)

**Overview of a Possible Program Focus: Making
Democracy Work**

As Convention 2016 and Election 2016 and their outcomes draw near, it is abundantly clear that the League's work is far from finished in *making democracy work* for every voter and every voice in our communities. From our interactions with League leaders and members, from the results of a recent member survey, and based on the political outlook for the next two years, we believe that every League will likely continue to focus resources on the core democracy issues that are part of the 2014-2016 program. The LWVUS Board believes that our 2016-2018 program should recognize this reality and do the same. The opportunities that we see over the next biennium are as follows:

♣ ***Voting Rights and Voter Protection***

In Congress, we must continue to push for restoration of the Voting Rights Act by supporting the bipartisan Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA). We must continue to support positive reforms such as online voter registration for all, portable voter registration within each state, and reforms to provisional voting, areas for which there are already pending bills. We must continue pushing this administration and the next to comply with the National Voter Registration Act by allowing voters to register through the federally-facilitated health care exchanges.

♣ ***Money in Politics***

Congress can take action to reform money in politics. Including the Stop Super PAC-Candidate Coordination Act in the House, there is legislation on each of the three pillars of our work on campaign finance: disclosure, stopping Super PACs, and public financing of congressional and presidential elections. There is also an anti-bundling bill. In addition, Congress can and must ensure meaningful enforcement of existing and future laws. The Federal Election Commission can't fix itself, but Con-

gress surely can. These reforms can be made despite recent decisions of the Supreme Court.

♣ ***Supporting Voting Rights and Voter Protection in the States and Local Communities***

The fight continues in statehouses and court houses to prevent legislation that suppresses the vote. Support also continues for reforms like online voter registration and expansion of early voting.

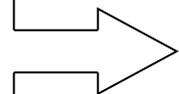
♣ ***Voting Rights and Voter Protection Following Election 2016***

Election 2016 will be the most expensive in our history. The issue of money in politics does not end the day after an election, nor is it confined to federal elections or the federal government. Leagues are working hard to update our campaign finance reform position, and it is incumbent on all of us to work at every level of government to ensure that power is in the hands of the many and not the few.

Redistricting reform continues to be a goal for the League. Armed with a position every state League can use, we look forward to more robust efforts to accomplish this goal. LWVUS will provide both venues for coordination and expert assistance. Progress has been made already, but League-wide support can strengthen the effort.

In addition, given the current political climate, there will likely be continued calls to amend the U.S. Constitution through a convention. The lessons learned through our study of the amendment process will inform LWV's education and advocacy in this area.

See LWVUS Positions in
Brief on Pages 5-7



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of the United States

January, 2016

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.

Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision-making. In

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

Privatization

Ensure transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries.

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

Federal Agriculture Policies. Provide financial support to subsidize agriculture in specific instances, enforce federal antitrust laws to ensure competitive agricultural markets and apply clean air and water regulations to all animal and aquaculture production. The federal government should fund basic agricultural research to provide adequate safety of our food supply.

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Federal Role in Public Education. Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Immigration

Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

Sentencing Policy

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

Human Trafficking

Oppose all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

Complete details of all LWVUS positions can be found on the LWVUS member's website:
<http://lww.org/content/impact-issues>



Be sure to join us on January 16th for this participatory meeting. The program planning process is one of the important ways through which the League focuses its grassroots work to align each part of the organization with the others and with the League's mission.

Program planning will culminate with adoption of a program of education and action at LWVUS Convention 2016 in Washington, DC. The input of all League members will help shape the proposed program of study and action that will be submitted to convention delegates for debate and adoption.

Next meeting: January 16th

League of Women Voters
PO Box 51502
Livonia, MI 48151



Become a Partner for Change with
the League of Women Voters.

Yes, I wish to join the League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

_____ E-Mail _____

Open to any citizen over the age of 18.
My check of \$60 is enclosed.
Make check payable to LWV of Northwest Wayne County
PO Box 51502, Livonia, MI 48151