



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the
Ann Arbor Area

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Visit us at www.lwvannarbor.org

LWV is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation in government and influencing public policy through education and advocacy

FEBRUARY 2011

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Grand Opening a Big Success

Close to 100 people came to the Grand Opening of the exhibit, "Liberty Awakes in Washtenaw County: How Women Won the Vote" at the Museum on Main Street on a cold Sunday afternoon in January. Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Ann Arbor Area and the Washtenaw County Historical Society, the exhibit was put together by co-curators, Zoe Behnke and Jeanine DeLay. Both League members, Zoe and Jeanine have devoted countless hours to this project. The result is a professional exhibit showing letters, photos, newspaper articles and other artifacts depicting suffragist activities in Washtenaw County from 1910-1920. If you haven't already seen this acclaimed exhibit, I encourage you to do so. The exhibit at the Museum on Main Street, 500 North Main, is open every day, noon to 4 pm until February 27. Zoe Behnke will be there to welcome you.

Program Planning for 2011-13

Twelve League members gathered at Paesano's last month to give guidance to the League of Women Voters of Michigan Board and to our Local League Board. Members supported the concept of a state-wide study on "Redistricting". Doing a study will enable us to develop a state position so that we can lobby the state legislature. See Nancy Schewe's article on redistricting for further information on local opportunities.

Shirley Axon will lead a committee of League members who are interested in updating our local position on Urban Planning. Please contact Shirley at 734-475-1817 or shirleyaxon@comcast.net, if you would like to help.

March 8, 2011, 7-9 pm: Information and Consensus Meeting on "Alternative Voting Systems" at Turner Senior Resource Center, 2401 Plymouth Road in Ann Arbor

Our state study this biennium has been a study of "Alternative Voting Systems", including Plurality, Approval and Instant Runoff. The latter, Instant Runoff, was used in the Ann Arbor Mayoral race in the past. Come learn more about these other ways of determining election winners and give your opinion on whether we should adopt any of them in Michigan.

Come to Traverse City, May 20-22

The League of Women Voters of Michigan State Convention will be held in Traverse City, May 20-22, 2011; see State President Jessica Reiser's "Call to Convention". Our Local League is entitled to send five delegates (the President plus four other local League members). Please let me know (susanprakkensmith@comcast.net) if you are interested in attending. Our board will elect our delegates at our February 22 Board meeting.

Many Thanks to our Supporters

Once again our members have generously supported our Local League activities. Forty-one different contributors donated a total of \$2,715 to the League of Women Voters Education Fund, our Local League budget or both. We are deeply appreciative of these gifts. Since we keep only \$9.00 of the \$60.00 each of us

pays in local dues (the balance goes to the state and national leagues), these extra contributions from our members are essential to carrying out League activities in the Ann Arbor Area.

E-Newsletters Save Money, Please Give Us Your Email Address

At a time of rising costs for paper, printing and postage, we need to conserve our resources by emailing the Newsletter to as many members as possible. If you didn't receive this Newsletter by email and you are willing to do so, please send your email address to Joan Overmire at, thomasovermire@sbcglobal.net. We never share our email address list with others.

Hope to see you at our upcoming March 8 meeting on Alternative Voting Systems.

Sue Smith susanprakkensmith@comcast.net



Zoe Behnke, Program Director

Jeanine DeLay and I started working on this exhibit about two years ago. This exhibit melds the local history of the movement with the national and international exhibit. The exhibit includes information boards and artifacts. After meeting with Susan Nenadic and her staff at the museum, Jeanine brought in Steve Maggio, a graphic designer, who looked at the design and offered suggestions on how to make it flow from room to room and to accent the artifacts. Then Jeanine took my information and her information and wrote the texts for the boards. She brought in Linda Fitzgerald, an experienced copywriter, who assisted with the editing of the boards.

I contacted CTN and the on-line newspapers. James Dickson (Ann Arbor.com) is writing an article on it. Jodie Mason (A2Journal) wrote two articles and recorded a video. Jodie's articles can be viewed on A2Journal.com (type "Liberty Awakes" in search). Also, A2Journal's first article appeared in Ann Arbor, Saline, and Milan Heritage Newspapers. Lucy Ann Lance interviewed Jeanine, Saturday, January 15th, for her Saturday morning radio program (which can be streamed on your computer, Lucy Ann is at 1290). CTN took pictures at the museum for its "FYI" program.

Sue, Jeanine, and I did a half hour taping for CTN in October. It can be streamed on your computer, or you can call CTN to have it replayed. The three of us spoke at the Bentley Library on the history of suffrage and the exhibit for the Washtenaw County Historical Society November lecture. Forty people attended that event.

We would like to thank everyone who loaned artifacts for the exhibit. Peggy Hiss loaned us a picture that included her Mother, Grandmother, and Great-Grandmother sitting in a car for a suffrage parade in Ohio.

We have received many compliments from the visitors. Additionally, visitors have returned with their friends.

Please visit our website lwvannarbor.org to listen to the podcasts and find other information under "Liberty Awakes". Thanks to Mary Lou Unterburger and Virginia VandenBroek for their podcast interviews about their first voting experiences.

Special thanks to Pauline Walters who is there every day during the week so we can keep the museum open daily. Thanks to the staff at the museum for allowing us to use it for the exhibit and for all their assistance.

We would like to thank the members for supporting this exhibit. If you have not had a chance to see it yet, it will run through February 27th. Lunch and Learn are on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in February from 12:00-1:00. The museum is at 500 N. Main Street, Ann Arbor. It is opened 7 days a week from 12:00-4:00.

Opening Celebration For Liberty Awakes in Washtenaw County

The opening celebration was held on January 16th at the Museum on Main Street. There were approximately 100 people. There were two county commissioners (Rob Turner and Kristen Judge) and Sabra Briere from Ann Arbor City Council. Jodie Mason from the A2 Journal came to the event. Sue Smith opened the program and explained the League. Then Sue introduced Jeanine and me. We thanked everyone who contributed to the exhibit. (Go to <http://tinyurl.com/6blrjvl> to see highlights of the exhibit!)

FIRST CALL TO STATE CONVENTION
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MICHIGAN
Traverse City May 20-22, 2011

In accordance with the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Michigan, I hereby issue the first call for all recognized local Leagues to send delegates to the thirty-second biennial State Convention of the League of Women Voters of Michigan to be held May 20-22, 2011 at the Park Place Hotel. -- Jessica Reiser, President

YEARS AND YEARS AND YEARS

Many thanks to each and all of you who have paid your individual or household membership dues for the calendar year 2011. You are fully paid until December 31, though you will be asked to make a renewal payment this fall. Generally members who pay after July 1 are considered paid for the remainder of that year and the year to come. (Good deal for new or lapsed members!) The calendar year is our membership year for local members to pay and also for local Leagues to make their Per Member Payments (PMP) to both the State and the National Leagues.

Our (as well as the State and National) fiscal year runs July 1 through June 30. This is a bookkeeping year and has little effect on the membership except through the Treasurer's monthly reports and the Budgeting process.

Our program (meetings and action) year tends to be September through May. Many projects and Voter Service work, however, come during the summer months, so we never officially head off on holiday.

So, wherever you are, and wherever we are: Happy New Year!

WHY REDISTRICTING MATTERS – Nancy Schewe, VP-Membership

Redistricting should foster the democratic principle of allowing voters to choose their elected officials rather than be a process in which we allow our elected officials to "choose their constituents."

Mary G. Wilson, President, LWVUS

Now that the 2010 Census is complete, federal law requires that state and local governing bodies begin the process of redistricting if there have been significant shifts in population since the last census. The Census Bureau has an April 1 deadline for sending data to the states and then on to local levels. Once the data is received, each governing body will begin its work of creating redistricting plans, which must be complete in time for the next election cycle.

The LWVUS promotes four essential principles to assure representative government:

1. An accurate and complete count in Census 2010 is an essential building block for all redistricting efforts;
2. The process used for redistricting must be transparent to the public;
3. The redistricting process, at all levels of government, must provide data, tools and opportunities for the public to have direct public input into specific plans under consideration by the redistricting body;
4. In order to achieve representative democracy, redistricting plans must be drawn in a manner that allows elected bodies to reflect the diversity of the populace, especially racial and ethnic diversity.

In Michigan, the state legislature will draw lines for U.S. Congressional Districts and the State Legislature. In Washtenaw County, an Apportionment Commission, consisting of the County Clerk, the County Treasurer, the Prosecuting Attorney, and the Chairs of the two major parties, has sixty days to select a districting plan. This commission also determines how many districts there will be. Once the plan is complete, it must then be presented for public comment. The City of Ann Arbor has a similar process.

The Ann Arbor Area League is in communication with the clerks of both the City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County and has offered to host a community forum presenting the new redistricting plans to the public. Stay tuned to our website lwvannarbor.org and your email for information about upcoming redistricting meetings and forums.

League of Women Voters - Ann Arbor Area
Officers and Directors for 2010-2011

Officers and Directors

President	Sue Smith	Secretary	Trina Borenstein
VP-Membership	Nancy Schewe	Treasurer	Judith Mich
Program Director	Zoe Behnke	Ed Fund Treasurer	Betty Bishop
Natural Resources	Shirley Axon		

Offboard

Mailing	Nancy Brucken	Newsletter	Trina Borenstein
Membership Sec'y	Joan Overmire	Webmaster	Susan Wooley

FEBRUARY - MAY 2011 CALENDAR

February 22: Board Meeting

February/March: Update "Your Elected Officials" (YEO) Brochure

March 8: Meeting on Alternative Voting Methods

March 22: Board Meeting

April/ May Community Forum on Redistricting

May 20-21-22: State Convention, Traverse City

May 24: Annual Meeting, Ann Arbor City Club

Please check website for corrections and additional meetings schedule.