

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE ANN ARBOR AREA BULLETIN

April 2012

Box 3832, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3832

Visit us at www.lwvannarbor.org

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

Calendar of Activities

Tuesday, April 24, 2:00 pm - Consensus Meeting on LWV-MI Redistricting Study, Sweetwaters Cafe, 123 W. Washington, Ann Arbor

Wednesday, April 25, 7:00 pm - Candidate Forum for County Commissioners, District 7, CTN, 2805 S. Industrial, Suite 200, Ann Arbor

Tuesday, May 15, 7:00 pm - Annual Membership Meeting, Larcom City Hall, 301 E. Huron, Ann Arbor

Memo from the President

LEAGUE FIGHTS VOTER REPRESSION

The League of Women Voters at all levels-- national, state, and local-- is working hard to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to vote. At the local level, we have already begun registering voters and will continue to do so right up until registration closes in early October. We are also initiating efforts to work with the AATA to see that every voter can get to the polls. Please read the article in this newsletter about voter registration to see what we have been doing and how you can get involved. Or you can keep abreast of our activities by going to <http://lwvannarbor.org>

In This Issue

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**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS FOR
A VERY SPECIAL
ANNUAL
MEETING!**

Annual Meeting
Tuesday, May 15th
7:00 p.m.
Larcom City Hall
301 E. Huron
Ann Arbor, MI 48107
See parking and access information below.

PROGRAM

- Guided Tour of new Justice Center and City Hall begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.
- Business Meeting

Election of Officers*
By-Law Revision*
Adoption of 2012/2013
Budget*

- LWVMI President

Here in Michigan several bills have passed the Senate and are now moving to the House that would require a photo ID not only when voting, but also when applying for an absentee ballot. Furthermore, the bills tighten certification and training requirements for groups (such as the League!!) doing voter registration. The state League has been very active in fighting these bills. LWVMI President Sue Smith says, "The League believes that voting should be fair and safe, but erecting unnecessary barriers to voting, such as requiring photo ID, is not fair and is not needed for voting to be safe." Go to the LWVMI website at <http://www.lwvmi.org> to read more about its efforts to fight voter suppression.

LWVUS is working to protect voter rights across the nation as new laws attempt to narrow the range of people who can vote. President Elisabeth MacNamara stated in a forum "Excluded From Democracy: The Impact Of Recent State Voting Changes", hosted by Representative John Conyers: These new laws threaten to silence the voices of those least heard and rarely listened to in this country - the poor, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, the young and the differently-abled. Now is the time to act. We must work together to repeal these unjust and prejudicial laws and implement new laws that will lower the barriers to voting and ensure that every eligible citizen will have the ability to vote and have their votes counted. Check out the LWVUS website at <http://www.lwv.org> to read all of President MacNamara's testimony and to learn more about the League's efforts to ensure that voting remains open to all.

The work of the League is as important as it ever was and so is your participation! Thank you for being a member of the

Sue Smith, "State of the State League"

- Vote411 Demonstration
- Presentation by Friends of the Library Green

Note: LWVAAA has not taken a position on the disposition of the Library Lot.

*See accompanying reports

Access Information

Free parking is available in the city hall lot off Ann St., just east of Fifth Ave. right next to the building. There is also street parking available in the surrounding neighborhood. Walk up Fifth Avenue to Huron.

Entrance to the Justice Center is on Huron Street, not Ann St. Late arrivals will need to press the buzzer to gain access to the building.

2011/2012 Officers and Directors

President **Nancy Schewe**
 Vice Pres. **Susan Greenberg**
 Secretary **Cyrene Aksman**
 Treasurer **Judith G. Mich**
 EdFund Treasurer **Betty Bishop**
 Program Director **Zoe Behnke**
 Nat. Res. Director **Shirley Axon**
 Nat. Res. Director **Fran Lyman**
 At Large **Rosemary Austgen**

Nominations Committee

Margaret Hiss
Marina Brown
Fran Lyman

Off Board Members

Voter Service **Jeanine DeLay**
 Mailing **Nancy Brucken**

League of Women Voters.

In league,
Nancy Schewe, President

The 2012-2013 Budget, In Words

Nearby in this newsletter, you will see the Proposed Budget for July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. It has been discussed and prepared by the Budget Committee and approved by the League Board. The membership will be asked to approve it at the Annual Meeting on May 15.

It is a reasonable and balanced budget. Recent significant spending changes include dropping the \$55-per-month telephone service, resigning our membership at the Ann Arbor City Club, and converting to online delivery of our bulletin. Web communication, however, carries its own costs, which total about \$370 per year; still a saving and a must for moving into the future.

Basic expenditures are just that - basic - a necessary part of our infrastructure. Dues (per member payments) to national, regional and state organizations alone consume \$4300 of our own \$4800 dues income. Conventions, communications, meetings, insurance, and minimal supplies bring the annual expenditures up to \$7700.

Note though, that our budgeted income only balances our expenditures when nearly \$1900 is taken from our two savings sources kept in a business saving account and in our own education-only Education Fund. And, we continue to rely

Memb. Sec. **Joan Overmire**
Newsletter **Trina Borenstein**
Webmaster **Susan Wooley**

2013 NOMINATION FOR SLATE

The following members of the League of Women Voters - Ann Arbor Area have accepted the nomination for the following positions for 2012-2013:

PRESIDENT: Nancy Schewe
VICE PRESIDENT: Susan Greenberg

SECRETARY: Cyrene Aksman
TREASURER: Judy Mich

ED. FUND TREASURER: Betty Bishop
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Zoe Behnke

NAT. RESOURCES DIR.: Shirley Axon
NAT. RESOURCES DIR.: Fran Lyman

MEMBER. CHAIR: Rosemary Austgen

Congratulations to all.

Marina B. Brown
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ART. VIII: Nominations and Elections, Revised
May 2012

Sec. 1. Nominating committee. The nominating committee shall consist of five (5) three (3) members. The chair and two (2) members, neither of whom is a member of the board, shall be elected at the annual meeting. After the annual meeting the

on members' generosity for \$1000 in gifts beyond \$4800 in dues revenue.

I hope this adds some clarification to the numbers, and that you see both a budget and an organization that you can support, first at the Annual Meeting, and later with your contributions and membership renewals in the future. Your suggestions and questions are most welcome.

Judy Mich, Budget, 668-6491

FORUM ON PRIVATIZATION

The LWV of the Ann Arbor Area, together with the local alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, held a forum on the issues of privatizing services that had once been publicly owned and managed. In order to learn more about some of the plans that have been made by local governmental groups we invited Bob Guenzel, former Washtenaw County Administrator, Sabra Briere, Ann Arbor City Councilwoman, Lois Richardson, Ypsilanti City Councilwoman, Susan Baskett, Ann Arbor School Board member, and Andy Fanta, Ypsilanti School Board member, to share their thoughts and experiences surrounding this issue.

Several examples of privatizing work functions were provided. The primary purpose behind the changes was to cut costs. In the Ann Arbor School system the food services have been turned over to a private, for-profit company to provide the school lunch program. In the City of Ann Arbor the janitorial services have been privatized as has been the services of the Solid Waste Department. While the City of Ann Arbor had long provided its own composting services this is now in the

board shall appoint two (2) one (1) of its members to the committee. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the board.

Check out this website for all your voter needs. Presidential primary information will be available soon. Local information will be input as candidates announce their intentions to run and the election approaches.

LWV-AAA BUDGET
Fiscal Year July 1,
2012 - June 30, 2013
[\(Click Here For Full Version\)](#)

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<u>Proposed</u>		
A. Dues	5000	4070
	4800	
B. Contributions		
	1300	650
	1000	
C. Trans. from Ed. Fund		
	1190	0
	892	
D. Other Sources	0	400
	0	
E. Interest & Dividends		
	50	48
	25	
F. Trans. from Savings		
	0	0
	1000	
INCOME GRAND TOTAL		

hands of a private company. The City of Ypsilanti has chosen to outsource their solid waste collection, and that has helped to save money. Several panelists indicated that they were leary of privatization because it too often eliminated jobs held by city employees.

Bob Guenzel indicated that he preferred to see regional cooperation between public bodies rather than privatization. One example that Mr Guenzel provided was that the City of Ann Arbor and the county have recently combined their dispatch operations. Another approach to avoid privatization was for the three nearest school districts - Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Willow Run - to consolidate transportation services to protect the jobs of their bus drivers. Consequently the services have been taken over by the Washtenaw Intermediate School District.

Mr Guenzel suggested that governments have an obligation to examine all ways of providing services. When the government can save monies on aspects of those services, then more money may be available to deliver the needed services. One area, however, that has been continued by the county is its public defender system which provides legal services for indigent people. The county officials have chosen to maintain this function because they wanted it performed in a professional manner. According to Mr Guenzel, since approximately 75-80% of the county activities are mandated by the state government, it is appropriate for the county to maintain those responsibilities.

LAKE ERIE BASIN COMMITTEE

	<u>7540</u>	<u>5168</u>
	<u>7717</u>	
EXPENDITURES		
A. Operating Costs	500	195
	757	
B. Admin. Expenses	800	730
	430	
C. Convention & Workshops	1000	0
	1600	
D. League Financial Support	2430	2480
	2520	
E. Communications	300	85
	100	
F. Educational Activities	700	125
	450	
G. Position Support	50	0
	50	
H. Other		
I. Trans. to Savings		
EXPENSES GRAND TOTAL	<u>7540</u>	<u>5373</u>
	<u>7717</u>	

PLANNING YOUR FUTURE

Or shall we call it estate planning. A quick word to remind you at a time when you may be rethinking wills and bequests how very much even the smallest gift or remembrance to the League can accomplish. Our Ann Arbor league was the fortunate beneficiary of a \$5,000 memorial gifts this year. That alone more than tripled donations for over three years. It also provides us with dues restraint and enables us to take on projects

Our LWVAA is a member of the LWV Lake Erie Basin Committee. The group represents and works with member Leagues from Michigan, Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania, all states that border Lake Erie. It coordinates study, agreement and action of the member units in order to have the greatest possible effect on issues concerning Lake Erie and the Great Lakes. The goal is to increase public understanding of the issues that affect the health of the Lake and to participate in decision-making. To do this they hear from local Leagues of emerging and on-going problems and work with other groups, such as Great Lakes United. The main Topics of Concern are 1) Great Lakes Protection & Restoration, 2) CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations), 3) Invasive Species and 4) Power Plant Hazards. Meetings are frequently in the Toledo area and local members are welcome to attend and represent our Ann Arbor Area League. Our Huron River flows directly into Lake Erie south of Detroit.

Call Shirley Axon, 734-665-9349, if you would like to attend the next meeting.

Voter Registration

To kick off our voter registration campaign, ten of us were trained in proper procedure by a representative of the County Clerk's office. Our first effort was at the Veterans Hospital event for veterans where we registered five people. Next we went to a "Job Fair" at Washtenaw Community College and registered twelve people.

We have feelers out for opportunities at a couple of high schools, churches, and retirement communities. These efforts have also involved AAUW members because they have a big effort this year on GOTV (Get Out The Vote). We would welcome suggestions about place you think would be appropriate for the LWV to offer the opportunity to register to vote. Our big push will probably be in September after people

never dreamed of. Something so seemingly small and simple as \$100 given locally or to our tax-deductible Ed Fund would mean so much. The state and national leagues would also welcome your generosity. Thanks for giving it a thought.

-- Judy Mich,
Treasurer

UPCOMING FORUMS TO WATCH FOR

Save Wednesday, April 25, from 7-9pm to watch our first forums of the year on CTN (Channel 19). Seasoned moderators Judy Mich and Nancy Schewe will introduce District 7 County Commissioner candidates, followed by an information forum on the AAPS Tech Bond proposal.

Plan to watch additional forums in the month of July when The League covers any and all local contested party primary elections.

Finally, as we all know, this is a presidential election year. League members can expect several lively forum encounters in October featuring local, county and state candidates.

Please look for upcoming candidate forum broadcasts. Better yet, why not volunteer to moderate, serve as a timer or come to the CTN studios to see the forums live?

Our League Forums are not

have settled in their fall residence and before registration closes in early October.

only occasions to learn about elections and the parties in our area. They are a very fine excuse to host...your own forum party to watch them!

LWVMI Redistricting Study Consensus Meeting

Your League needs YOU

**Tuesday, April
24th
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
Sweetwaters Café
123 W. Washington
Ann Arbor**

To
serve
as
Newsl
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Editor
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t:
Nancy

The League of Women Voters will be meeting at Sweetwater's Café on April 24th at 2:00. The consensus questions are in this newsletter. Background information is on the [lwvmi.org website](http://lwvmi.org). We held a forum last spring at the Ann Arbor District Library. The forum is on "Video on Demand" at the AADL.org website. I had a hard time finding it. It is approximately an hour long. Redistricting: It Matters To All of Us This event was held on June 16, 2011 at Downtown Library: Multi-Purpose Room.

Schewe
nschewe@comcast.net
663-2027

LWV OF MICHIGAN REDISTRICTING CONSENSUS QUESTIONS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. The LWVUS position on redistricting is that the process should be transparent and have citizen input. What specific requirements to facilitate transparency and citizen participation should be included in this position? (check all that apply)

A. _____ A requirement that meetings of the redistricting body be subject to the

Open Meetings Act.

B. _____ Timely publication of proposed maps in print, online, and on television with an explanation of the rationale for them.

C. _____ A minimum period of 30 days after such publication for public review and comment.

D. _____ Public hearings held at different locations throughout the state

E. _____ Census data and software made available online.

F. _____ Other (please specify)

REDISTRICTING BODY

2. Prioritize the following options for developers of the redistricting plans with (1) being the most preferred and (5) the least.

A. _____ State Legislature

B. _____ Advisory commission - a group that recommends district plans to the legislature with the legislature having the final say.

C. _____ Backup commission - a group that draws plans only if the legislature cannot agree on a districting plan in a timely fashion.

D. _____ Politician commission - a sub group of legislators and/or other elected officials who form the commission.

E. _____ Independent commission - a group of individuals who are not legislators or other public officials.

3. If you selected one of the commissions, what factor(s) should be considered in the selection process? (check all that apply)

A. _____ Equal representation for the major parties

B. _____ Independent representation

C. _____ Minority representation

D. _____ Other (please specify)

4. What restrictions should apply? (Check all that apply)

A. _____ No current public officials

B. _____ No officials who have held office within 5 years before or after serving on the commission

C. _____ No current lobbyists

D. _____ No members who have been lobbyists within 5 years before or after serving on the commission.

E. _____ Other (please specify)

5. Should there be an odd number of commissioners to avoid a tie?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Should there be a requirement for a supermajority of commissioners to approve the plan?

_____ Yes _____ No

REDISTRICTING CRITERIA

7. Prioritize the following criteria, with (1) being the most important and (7) being the least.

A. _____ Communities of interest

B. _____ Compactness

C. _____ Competitiveness

D. _____ Contiguity

E. _____ Equal population

F. _____ Minority representation

G. _____ Political and geographic boundaries

8. Should any of the following influence the process? (mark Yes or No)

A. _____ Preferential treatment for one party

- B. _____ Protecting incumbents
- C. _____ Other (please specify)

FOLLOW UP PROCEDURE

9. If the redistricting body cannot reach agreement, who should resolve the deadlock?

- A. _____ A backup commission
- B. _____ The governor
- C. _____ The state supreme court
- D. _____ The legislature
- E. _____ Other (please specify)

10. If the plan is drawn by a commission, should it be subject to approval by an elected body or official?

_____ Yes _____ No

11. If so, by whom?

- A. _____ The governor
- B. _____ The state supreme court
- C. _____ The legislature
- D. _____ Other (please specify)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

12. How should desired reforms be implemented?

- A. _____ By Legislation
- B. _____ By Constitutional Amendment
- C. If you checked both, which is preferred?

13. Should redistricting occur only once a decade?

_____ Yes _____ No If no, how often should it be allowed? _____