



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

of the Ann Arbor Area **LWV-AAA**

Box 3832, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3832, (734) 665-5808

Visit us via www.lwvann Arbor.org

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

★ President's Corner

It's a beautiful day outside as I realize that summer is going faster than I had anticipated. The League has been busy this summer scheduling and moderating debates.

The reason that I joined the League was because I watched the 1979 debate for the Presidential election and thought it was well run with timely questions. At the National LWV Convention in Portland, OR, league members advised the president, Mary Wilson, to ask the political parties if the League could moderate one of the debates. (See her statement in this newsletter).

Speaking of the National Convention, Shirley Axon and I represented Ann Arbor. Sue Smith attended as a state delegate. Portland, Ore has an excellent public transportation system. Shirley and I took the rail from the airport to the hotel and then Sue joined us on the way back to the airport at the end of the convention. (See article in this newsletter).

The Ann Arbor District Library (downtown branch) invited us to hold a voter registration drive on September 19th and 20th. I would like to thank the volunteers in advance who registered the voters and attended the training session.

Please read Sue Smith's column on the "Judicial Independence" and when it will be held. This is a joint sponsorship of the Leagues in Southeastern Michigan.

We will have 5,000 plus voter guides (state and federal) to distribute in Washtenaw County in October. If you would like to help, please e-mail the League or call the League telephone.

On October 7, our 1st general meeting we will be discussing ballot issues and handing out Voter Guides. Please invite your friends to the Ann Arbor City Club (formerly The Ann Arbor Women's City Club). The board decided not to have a meeting this time for the first time in years in September due to the forum and the election activities.

Please read this and check out the calendar on the back page for the dates of the events.

On behalf of the League, I would like to thank Gwen Nystuen for publishing our newsletter for this month. Linda Smith's mother has had health problems and Linda has been busy assisting her Mom.

Enjoy this election season.

★ **Zoe Behnke, President, LWV-AAA**

<bliz468@aol.com> or 734-663-1664.

September & October 2008

SAVE the DATE: FAIR and IMPARTIAL COURTS FORUM on SEPTEMBER 22, 2008

Our League, along with four other Leagues in Southeastern Michigan, is sponsoring an educational forum on the threats to fair and impartial courts in Michigan. Increased partisanship, expensive elections and lack of recusal standards threaten the impartiality of our courts. A panel including Brian Dickerson from the Detroit Free Press, Rich Robinson from the Michigan Campaign Finance Network and several judges will explore the topic. There will be time for questions and comments from the audience.

The Forum will be held on Monday, September 22 at the Farmington Hills Library from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. We will be organizing car pools of League members and interested members of the public. Watch your mail for more information.

Sue Smith

League of Women Voters of the Ann Arbor Area

Gaia Women of the Great Lakes Basin will perform "Water: A Sacred Trust" in concert Saturday, October 25, 2008 at 7:00 pm at First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor, MI.

Singing, drumming, reflection, and music for all ages in celebration of and reverence for our precious waters. Presented by Celebrating the Planet at First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor, MI Contact: Colleen Crawley ccrawley59@comcast.net.

Carolyn G. Madden, LWV Board

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" MLK

August 26th, 2008 was the 88th anniversary of the 19th Amendment allowing women to vote. It's the first time that all women could vote in the United States.

National League Convention

Portland, Oregon, June 13-17th, 2008

Shirley and I flew out of Metro-Detroit on June 12th to Portland, OR. We took the rail from the airport to downtown Portland to our hotel. Shirley and I discovered that "honored citizen meant senior citizen" and she rode for 85 cents and I rode for \$2.25 which is a bargain compared to a taxi. The rail made several stops and we were able to see Portland.

The speakers as always are excellent with timely issues. One of the speakers was V. (Ram) Ramanathan, Professor of Applied Ocean Sciences and Distinguished Professor of Climate and Atmospheric Sciences who had predicted that carbon footing printing would appear in the atmosphere in 2000. He was correct. He was one of the speakers on the panel, the other was Heather Kaplan, Senior Policy Advisor on Climate Change, Oxfam America. Other speakers included Former Governor John Kitzhaber (topic: Health Care), and former governor of Oregon Barbara Roberts (1st female governor).

The convention averaged 924 members plus guests. There were 49 states, 13 districts, and 1 LOL. They had several exhibits including Oxfam, Georgia State League (next convention in 2010), and leagues selling items.

We had several workshops to choose from. I attended a workshop on Mom's Rising with thousands of members who advocate and lobby for better laws at the state and federal level which affect women and children, especially in the workforce. Please check out its website momsrising.org. and join. They are asking people to make employed women and children an issue in their campaign. Also, I attended a workshop on the media and how to get more coverage. Plus the president's workshop.

Shirley and I took the rail and the tram for one of our excursions sponsored by Oregon League. The businesses subsidize the rail and everyone can ride for free in the downtown area. If you take the rail into the residential part then it costs money. The Farmer's Market is in the free area for the rail and we saw several people getting on the rail from the Farmer's Market.

We would like to thank our League for sending us to the convention.
Zoe

The Ann Arbor Environmental Commission Report on the Huron River Impoundment Management Plan

Where: Public Library meeting room in the downstairs
Monday, September 22, 5:30 - 8 PM
Wednesday, October 8, 5:30 - 8 PM
Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 - 8 PM

It is likely the meetings will each focus on one section of the river—Barton, Argo, Geddes—so that attention can be paid to each of the issues for each stretch. City staff plans to place background documents on the web in early September.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER-LWVUS

Dear League Leader:

Many League members at Convention expressed a strong desire that the League attempt to return to participation in the Presidential debate process. I want to let our members know that LWVUS Executive Director Nancy Tate and I have been exploring ways that the League might once again play a role in this important process. I hope to be in a position to provide a more detailed account of our efforts via this Update in the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, I want everyone to be aware that the LWVUS Board shares your interest in reclaiming a role in the debates and that we are exploring various avenues in that regard.

Sincerely,
Mary Wilson

The League of Women Voters Mission Statement

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 influences public policy through education and advocacy.

League Basics-LWV-US

LWVUS National Popular Vote Compact Study (NEW)

Delegates at Convention 2008 adopted a study of the feasibility of using the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact among the states as a method for electing the president. A study committee has been formed and will produce background materials to be posted on the LWVUS Web site in the next few months. As the NPV Study Committee proceeds with its work, the LWVUS will provide consensus material to the Leagues. Because the study will be proceeding on a compressed schedule, Leagues should be aware that the deadline for submitting consensus forms will be May 1, 2009.

Klein Lecture Series November 16, 2008 3-5 p.m. Buying Local...All over the World Presenter: Ari Weinzweig from Zingerman's of Ann Arbor

Join us for a reception immediately following Ari's presentation.

First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor
4001 Ann Arbor Saline Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Get directions (734) 665-6158

LWV—2008 NATIONAL CONVENTION PORTLAND, OREGON

By Shirley Axon

MAJOR IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONVENTION

1. *THANK YOU FOR SENDING ME. IT WAS A GREAT TO BE PART OF THIS CONVENTION IN PORTLAND, AND MADE ME REALIZE WHAT A VITAL ROLE THE LWV CAN PLAY – HERE AND IN D.C.*

2. *OUR LWVUS PRESIDENT, MARY WILSON, COULDN'T BE BETTER!* She listens, keeps the rules with no comment or sour facial expressions – but lots of smiles. If anyone can arrange a LWV national debate this year, she can!

3. *THE MICHIGAN DELEGATION WAS LARGE AND WE ALL SAT TOGETHER FOR THE PLENARY SESSIONS.* We took up two rows and I enjoyed our other member delegates.

4. *THE TWO OREGON GOVERNORS WE HAD AS CONVENTION SPEAKERS WERE FABULOUS.* One, Barbara Roberts, was the first female governor of Oregon (1991-95) "We are at the table and we are changing the menu!" The other, John Kitzhaber, a doctor, said the Baby Boomer generation, (ages 42 to 65) has the responsibility to get going on the tremendous future cost of Medicare. Social Security costs will be small by comparison. Our national debt is 10 trillion, Social Security will cost \$7 trillion and Medicare \$67 trillion.

5. *THE PORTLAND/OREGON HOSTS WERE GREAT.* They were always around to answer questions, lead the various trips around the city, man the information tables of all sorts and generally made the Convention run smoothly.

6. *PORTLAND IS A WONDERFUL, 'GREEN' CITY.* I loved the city streets with rails down the middle! The light rail system takes you all over the downtown – for free – and has an extensive, larger area. As an 'Honored Citizen' (over 65) it only cost 85 cents to take the 40 minute light rail ride to the airport. The City also has buses and an aerial tram. There is a City requirement that all public buildings must give 2% of the building costs to art!

7. *The LWVUS HAS THREE CENTRAL ISSUES THAT THEY FUND AND WORK ON.* These are 1. Health Education; 2. The National Vote – election auditing and working to eliminate the electoral college; 3. Climate Change.

8. *I WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN HOW MUCH THE NATIONAL OFFICE PROTECTS ITS EXCLUSIVE LEAGUE CONTACT PEROGATIVE WITH CONGRESSIONAL PEOPLE.* They like to be the only ones in the LWV to talk to national elected officials and other federal groups. States and local Leagues should get approval from the national office before contacting national officials speaking for the League (we can always speak as private citizens). There is some grumbling about this from the members.

9. *THE GREAT LAKES CAUCUS WAS EXCELLENT.* This is an example of a regional issue that the LWVUS wouldn't have

LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force

The LWVUS Board has approved formation of a Health Care Education Task Force to initiate the Health Care Education project, which was approved by delegates to Convention 2008. [Click here](#) to apply for membership on this Task Force.

If you are interested in being on this task force or heading a our local League on this study, please let Zoe know.

LWV-AAA '08-'09

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|--------------------|--------------|
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the time or budget to get involved in and the local and state Leagues have a great interest in and should be talking to our national elected officials and federal organizations like the Corps of Engineers.

10. *ALL THE STATES HAD A ROLL CALL FOR THE PRESIDENTS TO TELL WHAT THEIR STATE HAS BEEN DOING FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS.* Some were very impressive activities—from organizing a change in how Congressional districts are decided to working with young people to educate them on political systems. I was impressed with what can be done!

11. *THERE IS A LOT OF LWVUS EMPHASIS ON GROWING OUR MEMBERSHIP*—the Membership Recruitment Initiative.

12. *OREGON WINE IS DELICIOUS.* We enjoyed a glass for dinner almost every evening.

League of Women Voters of the Ann Arbor Area
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2008 Fall Calendar for LWV-AAA

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| August 26, 2008 | 88 th Anniversary of the 19 th Amendment |
| August 27 | Board Training |
| September 1 | Labor Day |
| September 22 | Judicial Independence Forum (See page 1.) Farmington Hills Library, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. |
| September 23 | Board Meeting |
| October 7, 2008 | General Meeting - Ballot Issues and Voter Guides Ann Arbor City Club, 1830 Washtenaw Avenue 7:00 pm-Social ½ hour, 7:30 pm-Program |
| October 13th | Candidate Debate Forum on Community Access Television |
| October 14th | Candidate Debate Forum on Community Access Television |
| October 28 th | Board Meeting |
| November 4, 2008 | Election Day-Polls open at 7:00 am <i>"Democracy is not a spectator Sport"</i> Offer to give someone a ride to the polls. |
| December | Potluck |